

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of December 4, 2018 RMGANJ Meeting

Pat Schanzlin called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Terry Zane, Vice President greeted the group. She asked for a moment of silence for our 41st president. She announced that Marilyn Bidrawn will be moving on and Nick will be the Burlington representative and a new alternate will be selected.

Secretary's Minutes from August 2018 Meeting: Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary, reported that she had emailed out the November RMGANJ minutes and received a few comments and county reports. She sent out several versions of revised minutes with the changes, the last being version 3. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the minutes.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	
Bergen:	Karen Pennell
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Nick Hendershot, Marilyn Bidrawn
Camden:	Diane Shonyo
Cumberland:	
Essex:	David Haimes, Alice Poueymirou
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering, Dewey Goodman
Mercer:	Sudi Solomon
Middlesex:	Jerri Barclay
Monmouth:	Gayle Williams, Bob Magovern, Sandy Woefe
Morris:	Marion Ceruzzi
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane, Roberta Quinn
Passaic:	
Somerset:	Linda Madretzke, Cindy Hedin
Sussex:	Jane Gardner, Pat Schanzlin
Union:	Dennis Lenahan, Dolores Batz-Culp
Rutgers University:	Jan Zientek

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jane Gardner, Treasurer, reported that the current balance is \$4,840.55 and does not include the Eventbrite deposit. We still owe \$1,650 for room rental and other items are still coming in. In the end we should balance out OK. A motion to approve the report was made and carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Pat Schanzlin reported that there are some questions about why we have so much money in our budget. She explained that the money in the budget comes from the registration fees and needs to be used for advance costs for the next years conference. In addition pins need to be purchased in advance in bulk and get reimbursed over the course of several years.

MASTER GARDENER'S COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Jan Zientek reported that Brian Schilling, the new Director of Extension, has started looking into issues regarding how costs are recouped internally at Rutgers. For example, Jan reported that if he wants to use a student center room for a coordinators meeting, he has to pay a fee. Brian is presenting information about the Master Gardener Program to Rutgers management today. He needed data about hours volunteered in different categories for his report. In order to handle requests such as this and other items, the State will be purchasing the Better Impact software, which is Volunteer/Non-profit Management software for handling time reporting, scheduling, etc.. This software will be rolled out in 2019 to all the counties. It will allow easy access to data about Master Gardener activities and impact on the community. Sussex, Essex, Morris, Camden are using it currently. Rutgers is paying for the license and the cost will not be passed onto the counties. Jan also reported that he has been working with Jersey Cares to provide training for Master Gardeners on volunteerism starting with the interns. They will trial the training one more time in Essex and then revise it and roll it out in other counties in 2020 for interns. Jersey Cares is not charging us for the training. He is also working on volunteer management training for the coordinators.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Old Business

2019 International Master Gardener Conference: Pat Schanzlin reported on the 2019 International Master Gardener Conference. It is competition for the State conference. She asked everyone to take a look at the agenda. The registration is over \$300. Pat and Jan are investigating whether we can buy a block of admissions that we would sell as one day passes for about \$100/day. She asked the attendees to find out if their members would be interested in this. One big issue is the traffic in the area. She also questioned if it would make sense to do this in lieu of a conference. If we did this, we would need to decide how to honor our volunteers. In January and February while we have a hiatus, Jan Zientek and Pat will work on determining if it is possible to implement the day pass idea and determining if there are any volunteer opportunities at the International Conference. There was discussion on what would count as CEUs. Pat will find out the answer to the CEU question.

In the mean-time, we will assume that we are still having a fall conference. We need direction from the coordinators by March. The coordinators are working on an advanced-training/skill-based curriculum concept. In-house Rutgers speakers can be used. The space is lined up for 10/5. A motion to go in this direction was made, seconded and approved.

Officer Elections for 2019: Karen Pennell thanked the nominating committee. The offices are Vice President: Dennis Lenahan, Recording Secretary: Dolores Batz-Culp, and Corresponding Secretary: Joe Cooper. She asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Motions were made, seconded and approved to close nominations, accept the slate, and vote on the slate. The slate will be posted on Sakai by Joe.

Conference Action items: Pat Schanzlin will summarize the action items and we will review them in March.

Meeting Schedule: Pat Schanzlin reminded everyone that the next meeting is Monday 3/18.

Role of Historian: Discussion on this will be tabled until March.

New Business:

Pat Schanzlin reported that discussion on county conference assignments will be deferred until March. Sudi Solomon volunteered to work with Jan Zientek to clarify sales tax issues to see if we can have a Garden Market next year.

Pat Schanzlin reported that we need a volunteer to take over the pin process as Marilyn Bidrawn will be leaving the Board; we are down to nine 25-year pins and seventy-five Award of Excellence pins.

Diane Shonyo asked how other counties handle memorializing members who have passed away, sometimes called a sunshine fund. Several counties responded that their organization does not have any funds for memorializing members who have passed. The organization typically sends a card and if the members wish to do something, they collect money to pay for the memorial. The organization typically supports the effort by providing space to plant something or set out stepping stones, as examples. Some counties do have funds for handling this situation.

Break: At 12pm, the meeting concluded, and everyone participated in the pot luck. Thank you to Essex County for the refreshments and everyone else for the pot luck, Hunterdon is responsible for refreshments for the March meeting which is on March 18 at 10am in the RCE Conference Center.

COUNTY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Atlantic – No report

Bergen –

Speakers: Robert Lyons presented: Confessions of an attention-deficit gardener. An unembarrassed account of using annuals and tender perennials to create brilliant landscapes that change every year. From a purely light-hearted, observational, and non-scientific perspective, Robert described his own gardening habits, plant acquisition philosophy, use of color, and garden maintenance practices resulting from a life-long affair with ADD. Robert has a BA in biology from Rutgers University and earned a PhD from the University of Minnesota. He served on the faculty of Virginia Tech and North Carolina State University where he taught about herbaceous plants. He is past director of the Longwood Gardens graduate program in public horticulture.

Election of new officers took place at the November meeting. Newly elected officers take office at the January meeting.

Holiday party takes place today, Dec. 4 at Van Saun Park Zoo in the Education Building. MG's bring appetizers, desserts to share and celebrate the holidays together. Sandwiches and soft drinks are provided.

Volunteer Site News:

Garretson Forge & Farm celebrated the holidays with several events including a *Holiday wreath-making workshop*, Nov. 25, and a *Dutch Christmas* with Sinterklass on Dec. 1 with a holiday sale of baked goods and hand-made items.

NJBG Family winter hike Take an easy hike in the garden's woodlands Dec. 16. You'll learn a bit about the plants and animals around you in a hike designed to fit the group. *First-day hike*. Start 2019 with a self-guided family friendly hike in the State Park woodlands at the NJBG on Jan. 1. Weather permitting you can climb to the Mt. Defiance overlook on the Halifax trail and return, or hike without a climb. This annual event is a joint project of State Park staff and volunteers from the NJBG/Skylands Association and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

The Hermitage. Santa's Workshop on Dec 16th, Santa Claus and his elves return to his workshop at the Hermitage Museum's Visitor Center to greet children and families while preparing for the big night! There will be vintage toys, trains, Christmas trees, holiday decorations, music, and refreshments – and children can spend time at the holiday crafts tables.

Teaneck Creek Conservancy. Learn how to assess stream habitat at this citizen science event, Dec 16 led by Christine Favorito, watershed ambassador, and the Teaneck Creek Conservancy staff. Recommended for ages 10 and up.

Thielke Arboretum the new monthly program: *Nature Nerd Night* continues with high school and college students and adults learn about nature by collecting data and specimens at the Arboretum using scientific methodologies.

Veterans Home Project The veterans planted paper whites in containers this month as an indoor horticultural therapy project. Each veteran made a container or two to keep in their room or share with others.

Burlington –

The schedule for the 2019 intern class and other related activities are now in place. We are looking forward to meeting and working with the new master gardener interns.

If you like us, join us on Facebook.

Project reports:

Butterfly Garden at Smith Woods –

- All of the 12 plots have been winterized for next season.
- Seeds from perennials have been collected and stored.
- New host and nectar plants have been ordered.
- Each master gardener provided a sketch as well as a list of perennials they would like for their plot to attract butterflies.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Donation Garden at Medford Leas –

- The Donation Garden and Donation Garden Gardeners are resting. We will begin perusing our favorite seed catalogs in preparation for our planning meetings beginning in January.

IPM and Demonstration Plots at BCCAC –

- The salvia (some varieties are zone 8 rated) and strawberry plots have been covered with straw.
- A planning meeting for 2019 will be on Wednesday, December 5th.

Pinelands Preservation Alliance Kitchen Garden & Medicinal/Culinary Garden –

- One December 1st and 2nd, the PPA master gardener team participated in PPA's "Green Trading Post". Using plants from the gardens, team members made and sold lavender eye pillows and sachets, and sage smudgies. The proceeds were donated back to PPA in appreciation for their continued support of our gardens.
- Research and planning continue on the new medicinal/culinary garden. Team members visited Bartrams' Garden and discussed Native American and colonial plants with the garden's medicinal plant expert and came away with more ideas. The team also met with PPA's landscape architect earlier this fall to review the plans for the area where the new installation will go. As part of the overall project (and as a bit of an experiment) a team member bought seeds for a variety of plants, which will have to be stratified for anywhere from two to six weeks under refrigeration before germinating. Full-scale work will begin early spring 2019 accompanied by the usual panoply of gardeners' prayers.

Rancocas Nature Center –

- Master gardeners continue to clean out some perennials, weeds and transplanting hostas.
- We will be done gardening until March 2019.

Up-coming events –

- Quarterly Meeting – Tuesday, December 18, 2018

CEU Opportunities –

- Viewing party of "Living Soil: A Documentary for All of Us" – Tuesday, December 11, 2018
- 2019 Gardening Webinars – Kerry Ann Mendez; \$12 each; P yours.com
 - ❖ Saturday, January 26, 2019 – "Powerhouse Perennials"
 - ❖ Saturday, February 23, 2019 – "
 - ❖ A Fresh Look at Hydrangeas – New Cultivars"

Camden – HELPLINE

The help line had 23 contacts in November. It will operate until December 21. Questions have been about plant diseases, insects, planting times, pruning and soil.

GREENHOUSE

The hydroponics group is producing 6 varieties of lettuce, micro greens, basil and arugula. The vertical garden is producing cherry tomatoes. Aeroponics garden is producing Bibb lettuce. The operation yields 240 pounds a week and is donated to the Cathedral Kitchen and the Philadelphia zoo.

The greenhouse has begun seed sowing for the upcoming season. They will produce annuals and perennials for the parks, our Master Gardener sale and the Educational Gardens

Several articles in local newspapers have been written about the greenhouse's activities of feeding the primates at the Philadelphia zoo. They are also on U Tube, channel 3.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We have reached out to over 1400 contacts this year.400 more than last year.
We had one talk in November by the speaker's bureau to the Cherry Hill Rotary club.

PROGRAMS

RMGANJ December 4, 2018 Minutes Final

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

The November program on making floral centerpieces was cancelled due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled for December. 20 people have signed up for the course

EDUCATIONAL GARDENS

The permanent signs were installed November 21st. The final landscape project of planting trees and shrubs was also completed November 21. The vegetable garden's late plantings were killed off by the frost. The committee will meet in December to discuss future garden theme ideas and a list of programs to be offered to the public in the gardens next year.

PUBLICITY

Our web site is up and running and our Facebook page is being visited by 600 followers on a regular basis. The followers are from MGs across the country and some international followers as well.

MEMBERSHIP

The general membership has been invited to a social event the first week of December to greet and meet and celebrate an excellent year. The event will be held at a local restaurant.

Cumberland:

Pat Stella decorated the tree with help from Beth Osborn. Flowers from the gardens of Jan LoBiondo, Barbara Rook, and Barbara McOscar were used with red bows creating a lovely Victorian tree

- Allen English and Carol Henry cut and assembled raised beds to store and protect the many (over 200) plants potted for the Eco Fair. The materials were donated by Marie Nicke and Carol Henry.
- Marianne Bagliani decorated the bulletin board assembling a large wreath with garden elements
- Barbara Paulos and Barbara McOscar cleaned and organized the many MG bins in storage. Barbara Paulos gathered materials for Tuesday's pollinator event in Millville
- Doris Morgan, Lynn Houck, and Keiko Warner folded newsletters
- Marilyn English and Lynn Houck updated, organized, and copied fact sheets for our files
- Beth Osborn, Kathy Geiger, Keiko Warner, Doris Morgan, and Dolores Misiewicz cleaned seeds for propagation and made seed packets for distribution at our various events.

Propagation

Carol Henry and Patrick Conlon have been digging and potting plants from Carol Diament's home garden and also the "Garden On High". There are over 300 plants potted and stored at RCE's raised beds! Some MG's are storing Canna bulbs and Peruvian Daffodil bulbs from these digs in their basements until May.

Silver Run School, Millville

MG Claudia Rempfer's daughter, Lisa Baran, worked with Pat Stella in arranging a pollinator learning experience for 4 classes of second graders.

On November 27th, five MG ran four twenty minute sessions on monarchs and bees.

The 76 children were enthusiastic, eager learners. Presented topic:

Pizza Through the Years –how people migrate & their foods become part of a culture -

Presented by Pat Stella

Monarch Butterflies - Cheryl Loatman & Patti Sheppard

Honey Bees - Doris Morgan

Bee Coloring Book Fun - Barbara McOscar

International Master Gardeners Convention – June 17 - 21

Pat Stella submitted our years of learning experiences working with Wes and Andy on pepper trials to the committee assessing projects. Her report "Pepper Research in Collaboration with Agricultural Agents" took third place in the Research/Applied Scientific Methodology category of the 2019 IMGC Search for Excellence Competition! There were 73 entries in the competition. Great Job! Cumberland County MG will be recognized at the convention in Valley Forge in 2019.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Wreath Making Workshops

Again this year Marie Nicke, with a limited team, had a very successful class. Energy, fun and thanks echoed throughout the room. A total of 35 persons attended the two part workshop. The AM and PM classes had many new and returning participants all eager to test their creativity and patience. One young person attended with his Mother with the intent of making a wreath for his Grandmother. He left proud and happy with the selection and creation he crafted.

Holiday Mansion Tour and other Philadelphia Sites

The bus filled quickly! The weather was lovely and we received excellent reviews!

I will be compiling an email list of people who asked to be notified before trip press releases hit the newspapers as the bus filled before the PR was posted in the press. We could have filled two buses!

Marie Nicke made a gorgeous wreath that was won by Alice Phillips. The monies raised - \$170.00 - from this wreath will provide a food basket to a family in Millville.

Essex –

Master Gardeners of Essex County 2018 Meeting Schedule and Speakers:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Subject</u>
12/8/2018	None	General Meeting and Holiday Party
1/12/2019	Deb Ellis	The Birds' Perspective in January
2/9/2019	???	???
3/9/2019	???	???

Around the County

CALDWELL POLLINATOR GARDEN Wins an Award

In the late summer, a representative of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society drove up from Philadelphia to Caldwell to our pollinator garden. The day experienced one of those drenching rain storms that were frequent earlier this year in our area. The woman representative had to retreat to her car several times after touring the garden and taking notes and photographs during her inspection of a project that had taken three years of dedicated volunteer labor. The reason for the visit was because we had entered the garden into the PHS Gardening and Greening contest held annually to pick the best gardens in the Philadelphia area which also included New Jersey and Delaware. We felt that our unique project which consisted of a series of mini- gardens, each aimed at attracting specific pollinators, surrounding a meadow of native, pesticide-free plants had a chance at being recognized as a valuable educational exhibit for the gardening community.

In October, we received notice that we had been awarded the Blue-Ribbon award for this year's contest in the category of Public Space Planting. The garden was created on a piece of property purchased through Caldwell Open Space Trust funds. It is important to point out that there was a total of over 300 entries in seven different categories and that blue ribbons were given to a small subset of the overall winners. Scoring was based upon several criteria including: variety of plants, suitability of plants, horticultural practice, use of space, imaginative ideas, and community partnership and maintenance. The overall goals were to motivate people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

It was fortunate that the judging took place a few weeks before the "once in 100 years" storm that caused considerable damage to Caldwell including wrecking the path (but not the gardens) around the meadow. Timing is everything in life. Several MG volunteers have been instrumental in creating this garden and I want to thank all of them again for their time and effort.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Branch Brook Park -Prudential Concert Grove - (Southern Section)!

We lead volunteers in weeding, pruning, planting and trans-planting perennials and shrubs. Come join us any day from October 2nd through November 6th, Monday through Friday from 9:30 through 12:30 (or whatever time to you care to give). We will also be working with volunteers on Saturdays: 10/28 - 9:30 to 12:30; 11/4 - 11:00 to 2:00.

Meet at the "Lions" and bring tools and gloves.

For more information contact Kasey Goger at kgoger@verizon.net or Mary Jedrezjewski at maryjed@optonline.net

Brookdale Park Pruning —ongoing pruning of Trees, to volunteer contact Pat Hewitt 201-913-8419, or hewitt36@verizon.net.

Caldwell Pollinator Garden - Creating new gardens. Contact Warren Marchioni. wmarchioni39@gmail.com

Education Outreach

Projects in schools. Contact Fran Kroeckel 973-744-6547, robertkroecel@comcast.net

Giving Garden an *A Lot to Grow* community garden that grows produce for the food pantries and soup kitchens in the Nutley area. Contact Elizabeth (Liz) Li-loia: eliloia@aol.com

Glenmont Project

Thos. Edison Nat'l. Historical Park in West Orange, Amy Trimarco, aatri-marco@comcast.net, 201-600-8656;

The Greenhouse has plenty of room for those that want to transplant and water. Contact Gail Chmura, chmurag@verizon.net or Pat Hewitt, hewitt36@verizon.net

Grounds Around Garibaldi Hall — help maintain and beautify. Meet Tuesday morning-early. Bring your gloves/tools. Contact Tony Oszmianski (973) 226-1351.

Special Garibaldi project workdays scheduled throughout the year. **Contact Suzanne Broullon.**

GROW Community Out-reach Program., 3-4 Sessions a year, half-day long, recent Graduates become involved. Contact Mike Mallette (973)230-4266 mfieldhand@verizon.net

Helpline volunteer-- Con-tact Lynda Meehan at (973) 228-5806 or lyndam1112@gmail.com, or **call the Help Line at 973-228-2210**; mastergar-denerec@gmail.com

Horticulture for Seniors meets monthly with seniors. Contact Helen Kesner (973) 731-0717, hkesner@comcast.net

MGEC Bee Keepers at Garibaldi Hall. Beginners must observe until the proper course is taken and equipment purchased. Contact David Haimes, dhaimes@comcast.net.

Pollinator Garden In Brookdale Park

For information contact Blanca Gerard at mygerard30@verizon.net

Rose Garden in Brookdale Park NEEDS HELP, lots of get down in the dirt type of work, pick days/time Contact Susan Jankolovits (973) 783-0977 sjankolovits@hotmail.com

South Orange Elks Rent Party Garden Community garden whose produce goes to food banks. Contact Karen Rutberg, at klrutberg@aol.com.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Speakers Bureau is part of our community outreach. Choose a topic of interest and become an active speaker. Contact *Jan Zientek* at Zientek@NJAES.Rutgers.edu and let him know what topics you can give programs on to other organizations.

The Teaching Garden at Presby Memorial Iris Garden in Montclair. Contact Suzanne.Trimel@gmail.com

Turtle Back Zoo has an ongoing call for volunteers at [https:// www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f4eaead28a3f85-zoovolunteer](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f4eaead28a3f85-zoovolunteer) or contact Suzie Yamarone at syamo@verizon.net

Save The Date

JANUARY 18-20, 2019	NJOS Orchid Show, Douglas Student Center, Rutgers New Brunswick
February 6-10, 2019	Deep Cut Orchid Society Orchid Show, Dearborn Market, Holmdel NJ
March 2-10, 2019	Philadelphia Flower Show
March 6, 2019	MGEC Bus Trip to Philly Flower Show

Hunterdon –

The New Class of 20 students continues to go well, most outreach teams have wrapped up successful and busy seasons, and volunteer hours are being calculated in preparation for our Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon in January. A conifer workshop is scheduled for mid-December which is a lecture given by one of our members who has a Christmas Tree farm, followed by making Holiday arrangements with greens. Our December speaker is Jay Kaplan from PSE&G who gave a very interesting talk on vegetation management for electric utilities. We are very proud to report that our Sensory Garden Team won first place in the 2018 International Master Gardener Search for Excellence Special Needs Audiences award category.

Mercer –

The speakers at the December meeting were three members of the Monmouth County Master Gardener Program who shared with us in great detail the establishment of their very successful speakers' bureau. They also generously shared with us various materials that they developed in connection with the operations of that program. This informative presentation will prove very useful to Mercer County should it decide to launch a similar activity.

Our fourth quarter food drive took place in conjunction with our December meeting. We collected canned goods for the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank, which provides services for numerous social service organizations throughout Mercer County.

We are proud to announce that our "Trent House Project, Exploring Our Colonial Roots" won second place in the Youth category in the International Master Gardener Search for Excellence Award. The program provides the opportunity for school age children in the greater Trenton area to attend a day long educational camp program where they learn about various aspects of colonial life, including colonial gardens and food preservation. They also learn about the importance of pollination.

On November 14, we held a continuing education event, which was open to the community, entitled Drying Flowers for Use in the Home Decor. The speaker was Nancy Nicosia, a Mercer County Master Gardener.

An advanced Master Gardener training program, entitled Stormwater Management: Home and Community Landscape, was held on November 29. The trainer was Michele Bakacs, of the Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Two additional advanced trainings are scheduled for December, as follow: 1) Innovations in Indoor Cultivation: Aeroponics, Hydroponics and Geoponics, to be given by William Sciarappa, of the Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension (December 6); and 2) Preserved Farmland and Open Space in Mercer County, to be given by Emily Blackman of the Mercer County Planning Office (December 20).

Our move to the new Extension facility in Ewing has begun and should hopefully be completed during the week of December 12.

Middlesex – No report

Monmouth –

With pride, on November 15, 2018 Monmouth County graduated 30 interns at their Graduation dinner. Twelve new graduates earned their 100-hour pins and celebrated the many milestone awards for service our veterans earned. Truly impressive were the 2000 (Beth Bailey, Tom Matulewicz), 3000 (Joan Cox, Patrice McCoy), 4000 (Estelle Lumer), 6000 (Sandy Wolfe) and 10,000 (Evelin Gaffney) hours awards! Congratulations to all of our graduates and milestone awardees. And, many thanks for all of your hours of service!

Also recognized for 20 years as Monmouth County Master Gardener coordinator, was Diane Larson. Diane was issued a Proclamation by our county Freeholders at a ceremony held in Freehold on November 20, 2018. On that day Freeholder Lillian Burry cited the many accomplishments the Monmouth County Master Gardeners had achieved over the past 20 years with Diane as coordinator. The 20th of November was proclaimed, "Diane Larson Day." We couldn't be more proud of this recognition for Diane and the Master Gardeners.

Although it is the end of the year and gardens have been put to bed, plans for our School Garden Conference, Spring Symposium, Speakers Bureau and Junior Master Gardener Programs have already begun. Our Speakers Bureau already has talks scheduled for the winter and early spring and will continue to vet new speaker's talks to add to our topic list. The Spring Symposium (March 30th) and School Garden Conference (April 5th) have had their speakers lined up and will be finalizing the many details for successful days of educating our county residents. And, even though our spring plant sale isn't until May, our first meeting will be in January!

And, it was a pleasure to be asked by the Mercer County Master Gardeners to give a presentation on December 3rd regarding the set-up and organization of our Speakers Bureau Program. Thank you to Linda Balzer and Debbie LaGattuta, Co-chairs of this committee, for giving a very organized and clear overview of the program which included, forms, program management, topics, speaker vetting, creating power point programs and general management of the committee. Our presentation was well received, and we were very glad to share!

The last event for this year is the well-deserved and always popular Holiday Recognition Luncheon! We will have our annual auction with Arnold Kleeburg as auctioneer and do two things we always enjoy... eat and enjoy good company! Our wish for all of you is to have a very Happy Holiday and a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Morris – No report

Ocean –

Our coordinator has started working on an important project involving Ocean County MGs and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. In conjunction with Paul Kurtz of the Department of Agriculture, a group of our MGs will initiate an assessment of stands of *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven) in high traffic areas of Ocean County. The volunteers will be trained before they begin the assessment.

An Open House was held for those considering the Master Gardener course early in November. The new class will begin in January. Veteran MGs have volunteered to mentor the new students.

The Helpline Committee will be working on preparing training sessions for veterans and interns next year. Most of our gardens have stopped producing, but herbs are still being harvested and given to food pantries. When offered, MGs are enthusiastic about gleaning with Farmers Against Hunger and donating to food pantries.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

The IPM Committee is going to start holding clinics at various locations in the county in 2019, including retirement communities and community gardens to meet directly with the public to observe any insect or disease problems.

Our Greenhouse, which grows specialty annuals, is holding an information session for prospective volunteers in December. Greenhouse workers will receive education as to proper greenhouse procedures early next year.

Trips and Tours is having a trip to New Castle on December 8th and a trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show in March.

Passaic – No report

Somerset– No report

Sussex – No report

Union –

New Class: Union County Master Gardeners will celebrate the holidays with a party hosted by the New Class. Donations of toys and canned goods will be collected for Saint Joseph's Crisis Center in Elizabeth on December 4. A new Executive Board Ballot will be voted upon at this time by Certified Master Gardeners. Ballots are due December 20.

Education: Tina Helmstetter lead over 35 Master Gardeners with design inspiration and techniques for creating and decorating holiday seasonal arrangements on November 27. Tina is a fellow Master Gardener and began her career in horticulture in 1987 at Daub's Garden Center in Lebanon, NJ. Starting with perennial sales, she worked her way up to head florist, head buyer for plant material, trees, shrubs and perennials. She has worked with Forever Flowers in Fords, working on Jon Bon Jovi's wedding in NYC and Victoria's Floral in Cranford. Since 2009, Tina has worked at Great Swamp Greenhouses in Gillette as shrub yard manager in charge of purchasing and sales.

Children's Committee: Clark Girl Scout Troop learned about insects from a talk given by Madeline DiNardo, and MGs James Keane and Harry Faulks on October 2

October 4, thirty 4th and 5th graders from the Winfield Park School System visited the Demonstration Garden. The school received a grant for a community garden and students had the opportunity to plant sun flowers around the area. The teacher had visited the garden previously with a charter school and thought the expertise of Master Gardener volunteers could benefit her students. Ten MG volunteers and Madeline welcomed the students, their teacher and four chaperones. Five activities were provided and six students rotated to a different station every 25 minutes. Activities were chosen based upon the community garden theme: Insect Talk; Planting a Seed; Sharing Garden Tour; Natures Paints; and Insect Walk. The teacher sent a thank you email to Madeline.

Sharing Garden: Distributed fresh produce from our Garden to 14 Agencies in 2018: Connecticut Farms, Union; Covenant Manor, Plainfield; Cranford Family Services, Cranford; First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth, Elizabeth; Home First Food Pantry, Plainfield; Little Flower Pantry, Berkeley Heights; NJ Mobile Meals Westfield, Westfield; Plainfield Action Services, Plainfield; Plainfield Family Services, Plainfield; Scotch Plains Senior Center, Scotch Plains; St. Bartholomew Food Pantry, Scotch Plains; St. Joseph's Social Service Center, Elizabeth; The Lord's Kitchen, Plainfield; Westfield Food Pantry, Westfield. They are expanding their agency database for those who would be interested in receiving produce from the Sharing Garden, Herb Garden, and the Annex.

Cutting Garden: Thanked by Sharing Garden for every week they sent fresh flower bouquets to the agencies and soup kitchens along with the fresh produce. Everyone LOVED the flowers.

Demonstration Garden: Thank you note received from Betty Ann Kelly, Environmental Specialist Union County Dept. of Parks & Recreation to Master Gardeners for help with the **Invasive Species Plant Swap Program**. The County started a new program in 2018, to encourage residents to remove invasive plant species from their property and "swap" them for a native plant. The Demonstration Garden hosted the

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

second part of the educational event on June 7. The first part was a lecture held in the Trailside Nature and Science Center's auditorium identifying invasive plants with photos and descriptions.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 12 noon. The next meeting is 3/18/2019.

Respectfully Submitted
Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary