

**Master Gardeners of Bergen County  
Board of Directors Minutes for  
Feb. 27, 2018**

Meeting was called to order by Carolyn Gretchen at 5:30.

**Present at the meeting:** Joseph Cooper, Carolyn Gretchen, Dennis Gretchen, Terri Pegg, Melody Corcoran, Hank Annunziata, Karen Pennell, Miriam Taub, Patrick Lull, Mark Penchinar, Donna Dorgan, Donna Karpel, Karen Riede, Dorothy Penkalski, Smadar Shemmesh, Bruce Walencyk.

**President's Report**

*NJ Veterans Home, Paramus:* Carolyn and Dennis met several times with the volunteer/ recreation team at the Veterans Home. The Advisory Board will fund our budget of \$2,111. The board asked for a wish list from us for individuals or groups that want to donate to the home. They also offered to consider funding a greenhouse in the future. Purchasing will have to go through the staff. They are seeking approval of Gardener's Supply as a vendor for other materials. They will "shop" with us at Home Depot. We added the following to a wish list: sensory items such as mobiles, wind chimes, birdbaths.

Volunteer time is expected to be 10-11 am Mondays and Wednesdays starting in the spring though MGs can stay longer. (An hour is about the most a resident is expected to work.) Initial work will be physical: Digging; laying landscape cloth and bark chips; planting two raised beds; creating a butterfly garden; and planting in pots due to the heavy shading and tree roots. Perhaps Eagle Scouts can assist. Dennis will draw the layout. There is a water source but no electricity in the garden area. Unit staff will recommend those residents who may be able to participate. Since this is an election year, Joel has proposed that we have a formal dedication of this garden. Carolyn will set up a time for Joel to visit. A future goal is a 3-5 year plan. There's room for a demonstration garden.

*Board job descriptions:* Since we have moved forward so much under Joseph's dedicated presidency, Board members are asked to look at the current descriptions and edit as needed.

*Current board openings:* We have an opening for Trips and Tours chair since Beverly Snyder has resigned due to personal matters. Suggestions are welcome for a chair or for co-chairs.

*Annual Committee Reports:* Committee chairs, please email a copy of your 2017 annual report to Carolyn, if you haven't done so.

*Joint meeting with Passaic County in April:* See Hank re: refreshments for our April meeting. Do we want a door prize for that meeting?

**Vice President:**

No report.

**Recording Secretary:**

Suzanne Danzig was not present, Miriam Taub stepped in to take minutes.

**\*Motion:** Donna Karpel motioned to approve January 23<sup>rd</sup> board meeting minutes, Joseph Cooper seconded and all were in favor.

**Corresponding Secretary:**

Smadar Shemmesh reported that she has been working with Serpil, who is showing her corresponding secretary duties.

**Treasurer's Report - Bruce Walencyk:**

In January, we received \$1,260; donations of \$460; \$45 was left over from holiday centerpieces. Donations may accompany dues (largest source). Occasionally, we get donation from garden clubs. Honorariums are tracked separately.

Opening Balance as of December 31, 2017.....	\$11,103.49
Income:.....	\$1,765.00
Expenses:.....	\$752.79
Balance as of January 31, 2018.....	\$12,115.70

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension - Karen Riede:**

Job opportunities for MG's are just being announced, thanks to an excellent reputation that MG's have earned in the County: Twinbrook Nursery, Franklin Lakes, is looking for help, see Karen for details. Rohsler's also has openings for many different positions.

RCE: New director of RCE will start this spring, he is Dr. Brian Schilling, AG Economist, who has been with RCE for a long time. Joel has worked with him and he will be a very good leader for the Cooperative Extension. In many counties CE's are facing budget challenges and positions are not being filled due to retirements. Fortunately, Bergen County is doing very well and have cultivated excellent relationships with this administration. Larry Katz is stepping down as RCE director after 10 years and will resume teaching in Animal Science.

Renewed agreements will have the MG teams delivering specialized horticultural therapy programs to post-stroke seniors in a number of towns and at Garfield Middle School this spring and summer, the current class will be delivering these programs in the spring and summer. A new program at the Veterans Home in Paramus is in the planning stage. The Gretchens are laying the foundation with the administration there.

The County Fall Harvest Festival will be Saturday and Sunday, Sept 29 and 30 in the same location in Van Saun Park as last year. We're having meetings with the county so this may help avoid last-minute aggravation and tension. The MG community is needed for many functions. Last year we sorely needed help in breaking down at the end of the festival. Let's get tighter teams in place please.

**Programs - Donna Faustini:**

Today's speaker is Arianna Lindberg from Rutgers' Student Farm. She will present "A Year in the Vegetable Garden." She is in charge of the organic farm and teaches at Rutgers as well.

March: Edith Wallace will present "Everything you ever wanted to know about lilacs." She has done extensive work at the NJ Botanical Garden.

April: This will be a joint program with Passaic County. Leslie Parness will present "Medicinal Plants of the Civil War" She came highly recommended by Edith Wallace.

May: I'm working with Paul Tappendum, a forager from Rockland County, to do a walk and a talk similar to the mushroom talk and walk two years ago. However, we would have to find a venue, maybe either Van Saun or McFaul. I am also working on the 2019 calendar.

**Speakers Bureau - Arnie Friedman:**

Our two volunteers who were to do a floral demonstration at the Retired Actors Home were replaced by the director with an in-house person. I am speaking to the Teaneck Garden club in April. The topic is "no mow lawns."

**Writer's Bureau:**

No report.

**Volunteer Records - Donna Karpel:**

I expect to get a few reports from stragglers March and April.

Donna reported 8,676 volunteer hours for 2017 so far, fewer than the same time in 2016 but not by much, but that reports are still missing. She said we always lose some volunteers every year due to declining health, relocation, or other reasons. The class of 2017 has been pretty good in sending in their reports.

Donna would like to delist Flat Rock Brook as MGs reported zero volunteer hours in 2017; four hours in 2016; and zero hours in 2015. It was decided to reconsider delisting the site next year.

**Archivist - Dorothy Penkalski:**

I collected the archives from Barbara Johansson. It consists of one file box and a photo album. I have not collected the archives from Cliff Gerenz.

**Class Liaison - Donna Dorgan:**

Two Fridays ago, we went to NY-NJ Trail Conference HQ for a presentation on invasive species. Two class members are interested in Chinese herbal medicine, which could make for a presentation. They are Sharon Ma and Connie Guo.

**Community Outreach - Mark PENCHINAR:**

*Earth Day events:* We are set for the Party for the Planet. Jeff Chan will bring supplies for all events.

All volunteer slots are filled for the three Earth Day events. Northern Valley-Demarest wants a certificate of insurance and a hold harmless provision. Joseph suggested contacting Joel and said Rutgers insures us. They also don't supply tents or tables; we must supply our own.

I received two more requests for a MG table for *Climacon* in Fort Lee and at *Overpeck Earthfest* May 20. We will not attend any event that charges a fee. We're not doing Oradell or Ridgewood this year. Karen Riede suggested that an experienced MG be at each event to answer questions.

**Hospitality - Hank Annunziata:**

I am gearing up for the April joint meeting. I will check whether Passaic will contribute refreshments as it did in the past.

**\*Motion:** Karen Pennell made a motion for a budget for refreshments, Donna Karpel seconded the motion and all approved.

**Potting Shed - Miriam Taub:**

We need photos for the Potting Shed from the volunteer sites.

**Membership - Terri Pegg:**

To date, 136 members have paid dues; four thank-you notes were sent to those who donated \$50 or more

**Publicity - Patrick Lull:**

No report.

**RMGANJ - Karen Pennell:**

For the "Awards for Excellence" given in October, we can either nominate two people, two sites, or one of each. Last year's winners were Donna Karpel and Monica Buesser. I have received some nominations and they will be voted on in March or April. Additional names/sites can be added. Waiting for the date of the fall conference.

**Sunshine - Dennis Gretchen:**

No report.

**Trips and Tours:**

No report as Beverly Snyder has resigned.

**Garden Club Liaison-Josie Ko:**

No report.

**Site Liaison Coordinator - Melody Corcoran:**

Contacted all site coordinators for current volunteer meeting times and dates and produced an updated site list. Contacted site coordinators who had not made presentations to the new class to ask if they wanted to present to new class. There are two available dates to speak to the current class.

The Tenafly Nature Center was removed from the list of volunteer sites at Melody's suggestion.

**Web site - Joseph Cooper:**

*MG of BC.org website updated sections include:* The Homepage, Potting Shed, Meetings and Events. Documents added: Rutgers 2016 Report, February 2018 Potting Shed and the 2018 Volunteer Site List.

*Volunteer and Membership Portal Progress:* The developer ran into delays from coding issues that set the project back. The issues had to do with multi-browser continuity, and since have been resolved. During this time some users had sporadic access to the system.

Section 2: Membership Information Page has been expanded to add Summary Details.

Section 3: Volunteer Reporting is done, and tweaks need to be completed before testing begins in 1-2 weeks.

Section 4: Administrative page is currently under development.

**New business:**

Patrick asked about the frequency of trips and tours. Joseph replied there's no set schedule. We can also participate on a tour with other organizations. Also, if a trip/tour is successful, we might want to repeat it.

Carolyn distributed written job descriptions of the committee chairs and asked chairs to review the description and get back to her with any changes. She asked for suggestions for the plants that might be planted in the proposed butterfly garden at the Veterans Home.

Meeting adjourned 6:50