

**Master Gardener Association of Bergen County  
Board Meeting Minutes – March 22, 2022**

**Present:** Hosting – Melody Corcoran, Arnie Friedman, Karen Riede, Joseph Cooper, Theresa Schneider, Miriam Taub, Herb Arbeiter, Elizabeth Gil, Pat Vellas, Donna Faustini, Keith Mazanec, Martha Carlucci, Suzanne Danzig, Janet Schulz

**Absent:** None

The meeting was called to order by President Corcoran at 5:35 PM

**Officer Reports:**

**President – Melody Corcoran**

Happy to report that all audio/visual equipment has been returned. Joseph recommended that we make sure the equipment is updated and in working order. Also, double check the bulb in the projector. Arnie volunteered to try out the equipment and will make arrangements with Karen Riede to do so.

There are three Master Gardener members who have expressed interest in serving on the trips and tours committee

**Vice President – Elizabeth Gil**

No report.

**Treasurer – Pat Vellas**

Pat summarized the Treasurer’s report for the period ending February 28, 2022.

Opening Balance as of: January 31, 2022	\$ 13,719.67
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Income:	Membership fees	\$ 400.00
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	Member donation	\$ 150.00
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	Speaker donation	\$ 300.00
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<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$ 850.00</b>
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Expenses:	NJ State Annual Report	\$ ( 30.50)
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	Speaker fee – Don Torino	\$ (150.00)
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	Contribution – Center for Food Action	\$ (250.00)
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Total Expenses:	\$	( 430.50)
Closing Balance as of February 28, 2022	\$	14,139.17
Total Outstanding checks: Don Torino – speaker fee	\$	(150.00)
Center for Food Action donation	\$	(250.00)
Eileen Diehl – return of membership fee	\$	( 20.00)
Bank Statement Balance as of February 28, 2022	\$	14,559.17

**Motion:** Arnie motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Joseph seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” - APPROVED.

**Recording Secretary – Keith Mazanec**

Keith stated that the final copy of the February 22, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes had been sent out to all Board Members for review, and that if there were no changes or questions, proposed that a motion be made to approve them.

**\*Motion:** Arnie motioned to approve the February, 2022 meeting minutes; Joseph seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” APPROVED.

**Corresponding Secretary – Miriam Taub:**

Mailed thank-you cards for their board service to Sandi Liberti and Autumn O’Shea. Distributed March and March Mid-Month Potting Sheds. Also sent “reminder” emails about dues to MGs who paid 2021 dues but had not paid 2022 dues; included recently certified MGs who have yet to pay dues. Forwarded to Karen 3 inquiries that came to the “info@mgofbc” mailbox. Two were seeking help with gardening projects, one from Smith School in Hillsdale and the other from the Closter Environmental Commission.

**Old Business:**

**Archivist records** – Theresa is in the process of coordinating with Dorothy Penkalski a time to pick up archived meeting minutes and turn them over to Karen Riede.

**Hospitality Supplies** – As of today, Sandi Liberti has not been in touch with Miriam regarding the return of our hospitality supplies. Martha Carlucci to reach out to Sandi concerning this.

**Outreach Events** – Karen sent out an email to students to get volunteers to fill shifts for upcoming events: Ridgewood Daffodil Day on April 10, Party for the Planet at the Van Saun Park Zoo on April 24 and the Earth Day event in Ridgefield Park on May 21. Karen to email information about these events to Miriam for posting in the Potting Shed.

**Board presentation at MG Class** – Miriam and Arnie gave a presentation to the MG class of 2022. Arnie spoke about the Speakers Bureau and encouraged the new students to volunteer as speakers. Miriam spoke about the Potting Shed, the mgofbc.org website, and our monthly meetings.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Community outreach liaison** - Arnie Friedman

The Speakers Bureau has been active with Zoom talks and planning in-person presentations for later in the year. Linda Flynn and Robyn Lowenthal have booked presentations. Arnie reviewed outreach efforts with the Class of 2022.

#### **Hospitality** – Martha Carlucci

No report, however she reiterated that she will be reaching out to Sandi regarding the hospitality supplies

#### **Membership** – Theresa Schneider

There are currently 112 members who have paid their dues for 2022, out of 218. Theresa has updated the membership card and shared a draft template with the Board. There was discussion concerning the wording and logo. Theresa will redesign and send to board members for feedback. It was agreed that replacement and new membership cards will be issued to members who are current with their dues payments.

#### **Newsletter** – Miriam Taub

Produced March and March Mid-Month Potting Sheds. Ran first of the features on the volunteer sites (Washington Spring Garden) in the March Mid-Month Potting Shed. Purpose is to introduce each site and encourage volunteering. Features on the other sites will run from April-June. More than one feature may run in each Potting Shed. Solicited information on area plant sales for April and May Potting Sheds. Information to be sent to Janet Schulz and then forwarded to me. Bergen Regional Medical Center may not be taking on any new volunteers at this time.

**Programs – Donna Faustini**

Tonight's speaker will be Arnie Friedman whose presentation is entitled Beginners' Bonsai. For April we have confirmed Kerry Mendez will be our speaker, however, her presentation will begin at 5:00PM. Our speaker for the May 24 meeting will be David Robinson who will be discussing climate change. There was discussion on whether to continue holding meetings via: Zoom, or return to in-person if space can be made available.

**Motion:** Arnie motioned that we continue with Zoom meetings through May and return to in-person meetings in September. Suzanne seconded the motion. All in attendance voted "Yes" - APPROVED.

**Rutgers Cooperation Extension liaison – Karen Riede**

RCE Report to MG Association Board Meeting 3.22.22

By Joel Flagler

1, This is National HT Week and we pause to recognize the vast healing powers of Nature. The RMG of BC has been delivering HT programs since 1989, with some of the earliest MG teams in place at Bergen Pines Hospital when it was the county hospital (now Bergen New Bridge). It all started with an invitation to me from the Director of Volunteering, Lois Horowitz, in 1988 shortly after I was hired by Rutgers. She is the same visionary who worked fearlessly to save Garretson Forge and Farm in her hometown of Fair Lawn and get it protected by the county Dept of Parks. Lois had the ear of Bergen Pines CEO Ed Lewis who supported the new long-range vision to build a greenhouse onto the hospital. Together Lois and I had an aggressive schedule of speaking and shmoozing gigs to secure new support and raise money. In time we raised \$150,000 for the construction of the greenhouse. Even before the greenhouse was completed we had Rutgers MG teams--headed by Hollyce Kirkland--working in both long-term care and residential nursing units on the 13 acre campus. Back in those days I was present personally at almost every session. Later it became clear there were MG leaders who could help to oversee all the details effectively, and I could rely on them heavily. Over the years we also used the wonderful grounds and gardens to create plant activities and lessons for youth with developmental disabilities from several schools in the county. At the gazebo we painted artwork for the gardens and the youngsters learned about plant maintenance and lots more. Two professional staff Hort Therapists have been there off and on for decades; attesting to the commitment on the part of the hospital. Outside, there are raised bed gardens created by volunteers from the Bergen County Landscape Contractors; they did this at my request for assistance. That enabling garden has been the model for dozens like it in the tri-state area. It still is an effective and beautiful wheelchair-friendly space. Many thousands of patients have benefitted from the rich HT programming at the Pines/New Bridge--as delivered with kindness and caring by the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Bergen County. Since the late 1980s the RMG of BC has helped me create and deliver dozens of HT programs in the county.

RCE Report cont...

Some come and go with funding patterns and changing priorities. Others last a very long time and have become integrated into the overall milieu of programming at schools, nursing homes, correctional facilities and rehabilitation centers. Thank you Master Gardeners. You and Horticultural Therapy are perfect together.

**RMGANJ report** – Herb Arbeiter

The slate of officers has been approved as follows:

President – Nick Hendershot

Vice President – Sharon Asterino

Secretary – Cindy Hedin

Treasurer – Roberta Quinn

Jan Zientek, the State Coordinator:

County offices are beginning to open with optimism. New Covid guidelines from Rutgers (see memo below).

Plant sales are returning.

Annual service and education hour requirements have resumed. However, if someone is still uncomfortable with returning to public places, they will not lose their Master Gardener status.

Jan will be retiring in late June 2022.

Nick Hendershot, the RMGANJ President:

Hopeful for a half-day RMGANJ Conference, Saturday, October 15, 2022 at the Rutgers Cook Student Center. Plans are being kept simple and straightforward. There will be coffee in the morning but no lunch. They are investigating the cost and capacity for a hybrid Zoom meeting. Possibly no fee for attendees. Brian Schilling will be one speaker and possibly two more speakers. There will be no award presentations or county projects.

In-person meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume in May.

The following update concerning Covid-19 was issued by Rutgers Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Antonio M. Calado:

Latest Rutgers University Covid Update

Rutgers Community Members,

I am cautiously optimistic as the second anniversary of our pandemic-driven disruption approaches that we are moving ever closer to a new normal and a resumption of university life as we knew it. The extraordinary efforts of the Rutgers community and our commitment to shared responsibility have produced a safe environment in which to learn, work, research, and heal. I thank each one of you for your perseverance, patience, and support.

The university has been clear that the science and data would guide our path forward with respect to the health and safety of our community. As public health statistics continue to improve, we are making some important changes to our COVID-19 operating protocols. These changes lead us on a path to in-person convocation ceremonies and an in-person celebration at commencement.

I would like to specifically call your attention to the following:

Face Coverings

Effective Monday, April 4, use of face coverings in offices, conference rooms, research labs, housing, and public spaces in buildings will be optional. However, use of appropriate face coverings will still be required in all teaching spaces (classrooms, lecture halls, seminar rooms, etc.), teaching labs, computer labs, buses, libraries, and clinical facilities. Additionally, face coverings will continue to be required in student-staff and student-faculty meeting spaces.

The decision to use face coverings in spaces where they are not mandated is entirely a matter of individual choice. All members of the community should have masks in their possession at all times on campus.

The effective date of April 4 will allow for the community-wide return from spring break and a two-week buffer to monitor any travel-related spike or positivity rate increases. This guidance will be in effect through the end of the spring 2022 semester. Those who travel during the break are strongly encouraged to test before returning to campus

Requirements for Contractors, Volunteers, Guest Lecturers, and Other Affiliates

Rutgers has developed a new [university policy](#) that addresses vaccination requirements for volunteers, contractors, guest lecturers, and others. These changes are effective immediately. Frequently Asked Questions associated with the policy may be found [here](#).

## Events

All indoor events require attendees to show proof of full vaccination or a COVID-19 negative PCR test taken within 72 hours prior to the event and must remain compliant with published COVID-19 protocols. Effective immediately, face coverings are no longer required at events.

## On-Campus Protocols and Safety Tips

As some of our COVID-19 protocols are changing, I remind you of the following:

- Staying home while sick—for COVID-19 or any other illness—is required.
- Reduced occupancy in administrative settings remains unchanged.
- Self-screening using the [My Campus Pass](#) is no longer required. However, the tool will remain available for use.
- The university's COVID-19 vaccination and booster requirements remain in place.
- Using common sense and doing your part in our shared responsibilities continues to be important.

Information regarding these revised university protocols and other essential information can be found in the updated [Guide to Returning to Rutgers](#) and [Navigating Our Classrooms and Student Spaces](#).

The health and safety of our community remains our top priority. Protocols will continue to change as we consult with public health agencies and assess data, including the number of positive cases in New Jersey, COVID-19 hospitalizations, state and regional hospital capacity, and the severity of the dominant variant. Please continue to look for updates on the [universitywide COVID-19 Information site](#).

I look forward to continued improvement in the public health situation and to all the optimism and energy it brings to Rutgers.

Antonio M. Calcado

*Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer*

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**Site coordinator liaison – Liz Gil**

A Zoom meeting was held at 7:00PM on March 10, with the site coordinators and MG trainees, to present and promote the various volunteer sites in Bergen County. With the exception of four sites, representatives from each site gave a live presentation and were available for a Q & A following their presentation.

In-person:

Bergen New Bridge Medical Center | Lynette Stewart  
Butterfly Garden at Overpeck | Pat Knight  
Garretson Forge and Farm | Lida Gellman  
Hackensack River Greenway at Teaneck | Marie Warnke  
The Hermitage | Nancy Moses  
McFaul Environmental Center | Joseph Cooper  
NJ Botanical Garden | Dania Cheddie  
Thielke Arboretum | Herb Arbeiter  
Washington Spring Garden | Suzanne Danzig

Karen and I presented info for these sites:

Davies Arboretum | Jessica Wang  
NY/NJ Trail Conference headquarters | Terry Cohn  
Teaneck Creek Conservancy | Paula Leibowitz  
Van Saun County Park Zoo | Jeffery Chan

A link of the recording of the 3/10/22 MG Volunteer Site Zoom meeting and a PDF handout of site descriptions was distributed to the MG classes of 2020, 2021, 2022 and to the site coordinators following the meeting (see attached).

Site coordinators received an invitation to participate and a flyer announcing the annual Fall Festival being held the weekend of September 17 – 18 at Van Saun County Park. This year we have individual tents set up for each participating site to set up their own displays.

**Volunteer Records – Suzanne Danzig**

Total YTD hours for 2022 are 531, which include Continuing Education hours.

The breakdown of hours by category is as follows:

Administrative: 201.0  
Outreach: 184.5  
Continuing Education: 145.5



**Volunteer Records – cont...**

The breakdown of Outreach hours is:

BNBMC:	2.00
Garretson Forge & Farm:	16.00
NJBG:	2.00
Skylands Manor HOH	17.50
The Hermitage	27.25
Thielke Arboretum	80.50
Washington Spring Garden	.75

Suzanne to let Karen know who is eligible to receive their service pins.

**Website** – Joseph Cooper

No report.

**New Business**

**Rutgers COVID guidelines**

(See under RMGANJ report)

**Lifetime members**

Miriam has received several inquiries regarding dues and lifetime membership. Suzanne will review Better Impact reports to determine who has 20 years of service and has also accrued 1000+ volunteer hours. She will then confirm with Pat if their dues payments are up to date.

**Summer/fall picnic for 2020-2021 graduates**

There was a general consensus that we should hold an event for the classes of 2020 and 2021 in the form of a picnic. There was a discussion about where to hold the event, i.e., Rohsler’s, Van Saun Park or another venue. Martha to research a date and location, preferably a weekday around lunchtime and outside. There was discussion as to whom to invite and possibly incorporate a plant exchange.

It was reiterated that next month’s general meeting will begin at 5:00 PM, with the board meeting to begin following Kerry Mendez’s presentation.

**Adjournment**

**Motion** - A motion was made by Donna to adjourn the meeting. Joseph seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.