

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of March 18, 2019 RMGANJ Meeting

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

Dennis Lenahan, Vice President greeted the group. He asked if there were any new attendees. Marjorie Brooks from Atlantic County is filling in for Mary Lou Monihan – there is no permanent replacement representative yet. Lee Parry from Burlington and Betsey Simpson from Cumberland are new delegates. Deb Murphy from Union is a new alternate. Post Meeting Note: Deirdre Gallagher will be replacing Marion Ceruzzi as the delegate from Morris County

Secretary's Minutes from August 2018 Meeting: Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary, reported that she had emailed out the December 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 version 3 of the minutes. Tricia will update it to be "final" and distribute.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	Marjorie Brooks
Bergen:	Joe Cooper
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Nick Hendershot, Lee Parry, Merry Bogert
Camden:	Diane Shonyo, Patrick Goughary
Cumberland:	Carol Henry, Betsey Simpson
Essex:	David Haimes, Alice Poueymirou
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering, Dewey Goodman
Mercer:	Sudi Solomon, Bob Robinson, Betty Scarlata
Middlesex:	Jerri Barclay, Dale Duchai
Monmouth:	Gayle Williams, Bob Magovern, Jay Schaeffer
Morris:	Marion Ceruzzi
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane, Roberta Quinn
Passaic:	
Somerset:	Cindy Hedin
Sussex:	Jane Gardner, Pat Schanzlin
Union:	Dennis Lenahan, Dolores Batz-Culp, Deb Murphy
Rutgers University:	Jan Zientek

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jane Gardner, Treasurer, reported that the current balance is \$12,864.16. All bills are paid for the 2018 conference, but the balance does not include the Barnes and Noble check. In addition, pin money was found. A motion to accept the budget was made, seconded and approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Pat Schanzlin reported on Old Business below.

MASTER GARDENER'S COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Jan Zientek reported that he is working on trying to get a reduction in the room rental fee for the annual State Master Gardener Conference. He has discussed how to make the conference more sustainable from a fee perspective with Brian Schilling, the Director of Extension. He is hopeful that relief will be forthcoming. Pat Schanzlin reported that the registration process is the biggest expense and where we really need the most relief!! Brian Schilling is aware of this problem and is working it.

Jan reported that the Coordinators like the idea of tapping into Rutgers resources for hands-on training at the Conference. They are coming up with a list of what they would like. One thing they would like is a session and/or keynote speaker on what it means to be a Rutgers volunteer. They are also planning on adding training on how to be a volunteer/interact with the public to the new class training. The first volunteer training session for coordinators was held in January by Jersey Cares. Seven attended and they came up with other issues they would like to be covered in the training. They are also looking at adapting to changes

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in volunteerism. For example, millennials tend to pick an issue, whereas baby boomers pick an organization. In general, there is an effort to better integrate new class training across the counties to reduce costs and improve quality.

Jan reported that the State has purchased the Better Impact software, which is Volunteer/Non-profit Management software for handling volunteer hours reporting, scheduling, etc. This software will be rolled out in 2019 to all the counties and fully implemented for 2020. The coordinators are being trained soon. It will allow easy access to data about Master Gardener activities and impact on the community. Six counties are using it currently. Rutgers is paying for the license and the cost will not be passed onto the counties. There was a question about whether it can be used for logging helpline issues which could be very useful. This issue is being looked at.

Old Business

Officer Elections: Pat Schanzlin reported that Dolores Bates-Culp has resigned as secretary. The new candidate is Tricia Deering. A motion to nominate Tricia was made, seconded and approved. Pat appointed Dolores Bates-Culp to be responsible for pins.

Pins: Jan Zientek reported that the Master Gardener badge and pins are being redesigned to eliminate the current logo with the state and the plant/hand because it is not consistent with the standard Rutgers logo. The pins and badges are being redesigned to be consistent with other Rutgers material. The redesign fees, and pins and badges will be paid for going forward by Rutgers in recognition of the contribution made by Master Gardeners. Pat Schanzlin asked about pin inventory. Dolores Bates-Culp reported that the lowest inventory is 30-year pins. The 30-year pins that we have are generic pins. Old pins can be used until they run out. Dolores will inventory the existing pins and send the inventory to Jan and Pat. Pat will send a request for upcoming short-term emergency pin needs out to the members who will discuss the county needs with their coordinators and get back to her. Also, clarification is needed from Jan on whether the counties will pay for the existing pins or Rutgers will. Dolores and Jane Gardner will redo the pin order form. The badges will be black lettering on white and attach with magnets. A question was asked about whether the gold badges will still exist – Jan thinks they will. Existing badges are grandfathered. There was a question about the Master Gardener lanyards – the ones that don't say Rutgers are fine.

2019 International Master Gardener Conference: Pat Schanzlin reported on her action item to determine if it is possible to implement the day pass idea for the International Conference. They are not issuing day passes, and the idea of purchasing and reselling the passes per day is too complicated because of all the options. Instead Master Gardeners can register for the conference and divide up the days among themselves. The registration badge can be left at the registration desk, and picked up each morning by the next person. With respect to a question about CEUs for the conference, the text of each conference option will be updated to include the CEUs for the session.

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

Break: There was a break from 11:20 to 11:35 Pat Schanzlin thanked Hunterdon County for the refreshments. Monmouth and Mercer switched so Monmouth County is responsible for refreshments for the April meeting which is on Thursday April 11 at 10am in the RCE Conference Center.

New Business:

Budget: Pat Schanzlin discussed the budget which is primarily for the conference. It assumes the lunch price/cost is the same. Speakers are budgeted for almost nothing because of the assumption that we will be using Rutgers speakers exclusively. No speakers have been booked to date. The budget includes \$4,000 for some type of registration service. The registration vendor is a **big open item**. Eventbrite did not work out well and Rutgers fee was \$5600 last year. She kept the facility charge the same. She asked members to take a look at the budget before the next meeting. She is not asking for approval because there are so many unknowns.

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Pat reviewed her proposal for Rutgers speakers and topics which she had distributed. An updated version is included at the end of these minutes. Unfortunately, Dave Robinson, the State Climatologist, will be out of town. Anthony Broccoli (climate) and Andy Wyenandt (vegetable pathology) have not responded yet. Bill Sciarappa (hydroponics) said yes. After discussion the group converged on a focus on the effect of climate change on gardening in NJ. "How Did Climate Change My Garden" is the proposed title. There was a discussion about how hydroponics fits into the theme. It could be viewed as a method of overcoming climate-change caused food shortages. It was brought up that there is an issue that the food grown through hydroponics is not as nutritious or delicious. We can ask for this to be addressed in the talk. Jan Zientek said that he has access to a lot of the topics of interest that have been given to commercial growers. He can make contacts. He also said that we could have training and discussion sessions. Pat will go back to the speakers and ask them to tailor their talks to the topic. Another suggestion was Jason Grabowski on soil. Pat asked for volunteers to help interface with the speakers. Cumberland volunteered to follow-up with Andy Wyenandt.

CE hours were discussed – the conference feedback on increased hours was positive. The hours would be as follows: 3 speakers 1.25 hours each and 1.25 hours for awards. County segments could be incorporated. It was suggested that the international award winners from the state each give a 20-minute segment. Hunterdon, Mercer and Cumberland will check with their counties.

For recognition we will have the award winners stand up this year and will also do the award video.

Other conference issues will be deferred until next month.

2019 RMGANJ Conference Program – October 5, 2019

Conference Title: “How did Climate change my garden?”

Program Description: Record rainfall, temperatures outside the normal range, and new and strange plant diseases and insects are creating opportunities for different gardening practices. The outstanding resources at Rutgers U will discuss current climate and resultant growing conditions, plant and insect diseases, and alternative growing options. Additionally, three counties will share International Master Gardener Award Winning projects. **TOTAL Program CE = 5**

Potential Speakers: (need 3 @ 1.25 hours) County segment = 1.25 min

1. Office of the NJ State Climatologist -- Presentation on the science and impact of NJ record rainfall in 2018, temperature change, and weather patterns - Dr. **Anthony Broccoli**, College of Environ. Sciences, broccoli@envsci.rutgers.edu
2. Manager Plant Diagnostics Lab – Richard Buckley, clinic@njaes.rutgers.edu - Major causes of biotic and abiotic plant disorders, systematic approach to ID to bacterial and fungal plant diseases
3. Chair of Department of Entomology – George Hamilton, ghamilto@njaes.rutgers.edu - Alternative methods to control insects using flowering plants, retaining insect natural enemies
4. Plant Biology/Hydroponics – Albert Ayeni ayeni@sebs.rutgers.edu or **William Sciarappa**, sciarappa@njaes.rutgers.edu - Rutgers Hydroponics Program – how it works, problems in growing hydroponically and yields
5. **Andy Wyenandt**, Assoc Extension Specialist in Vegetable Pathology – wyenandt@njaes.rutgers.edu - 732-932-4400 ext. 4144 Plant pathology

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COUNTY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

Atlantic – Good morning, my name is Marjorie Brooks and I volunteered at our last monthly county meeting to step in this month for our past delegate, MaryLou Monihan. I wish to thank Pat for sending me all the pertinent information prior to this meeting so I could be knowledgeable of past minutes, reports and today's agenda.

In our county:

~ Better Impact has been greeted with much enthusiasm.

~ We have upgraded our Mobile Helpline/Plant diagnostics booth to include a portable digital microscope and plan to add an iPad and 2 new tents to replace our old one this year.

~ Our annual plant sale, held May 19th, from 9 AM to 3PM, is being transformed into a community education event to include speakers throughout the day, demonstrations by Master Composters and 4H groups and Environmental Stewards. Other events may be added to highlight extension work in our county. Educational classes presented by Master Gardeners include:

- Growing Peonies
- How to Create a Pollinator Garden
- Monarchs
- Landscaping with Native Plants & Shrubs
- Vegetable Gardening
- Container Gardening with Annuals

~ The column, "Cultivating Thoughts", written by Program Coordinator, Belinda Chester, is printed weekly in all of the Atlantic County and Cape May County Currents and Gazettes. It also will include Master Gardener events as we enter the season. This article has been well received and has garnered much attention for the Atlantic County Master Gardener program.

~ Our Program Coordinator is working on ways to acknowledge our volunteers more in the future like adding "volunteer of the year" and other awards. Our upcoming Spring Equinox Party, which will be held May 20th, is the first step. It is a social and recognition event.

~ Our Program Coordinator wants to see us as a county, and as a state, do a better job at recognizing the amazing work our volunteers do.

~ As of the last Coordinator meeting, there was discussion about some alternate ideas for, or in place of, the annual Convention.

Our Program Coordinator is in favor of an event/discount day at an arboretum or garden in NJ, maybe even an event at the EARTH center and large picnic. The thought behind this is to have it more of a recognition, and less about speakers. Our Program Coordinator was in favor of speaker events being something that could be broadcast to other locations so that they are more accessible to Master Gardeners in far south and far north counties. (Example: speaker is located on campus, broadcast to ACCC or CCC with the ability for questions to be asked or as webinar format in each county office).

Bergen –

Speakers: In January, Making the blues go away was presented by MG Arnie Friedman was his survey of the development of the modern practice of surrounding homes with lawns. He offered alternative solutions for creating landscapes that are eco-friendly, easy care and beautiful. Of late, he has been pioneering the replacement of turf with meadow-like environments of native, deer-proof, and easy-care plantings. Arnie is a New York Botanical Garden-certified landscape designer and former NYBG instructor and owns his own landscaping company.

In February, Jean Epiphan presented: Native ferns of Bergen County. She discussed how local, native fern species are ecologically significant plants in our natural forests as well as enchanting additions to our home gardens. She described how to identify and differentiate each fern by its subtle, unique characteristics. Jean is a staff ecologist and research project coordinator for Rutgers University in the Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Natural Resources. She is a member of a consulting team at Rutgers that advises management at numerous parks about new native landscape plantings.

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Volunteer Site News:

Garretson Forge & Farm kicks off the spring season with its annual Pea Day planting.

NJBG Historic landscape design lecture was given in January by the head landscape designer Rich Flynn on the history of garden design at Skylands, originally created by some of the most famous landscaping names of the era. Owls of New Jersey, Don Torino of the Bergen County Audubon Society offered an indoor photo presentation in the Carriage House in February. In March, Don spoke on planting annuals, perennials and native plants to welcome butterflies to your garden. MG of BC received a *certificate of appreciation* for their work at the 2018 Holiday Open House.

The **Hackensack River Greenway** through Teaneck has scheduled two cleanups this month of each Greenway area.

The Hermitage. In January, volunteers were honored for helping on the grounds by the Friends of the Hermitage during a *thank-you party*. The 2-day *maple sugaring event* took place in February with a seminar of the history and process from tapping to boil-down then tapping trees for sap. Volunteers continue to collect sap from mid-February to early March with another *boil-down and bottling the syrup* in mid-March. A *lecture* titled "A feminine point of view - the women of the Hermitage from Theodosia Prevost Burr to Mary Elizabeth Rosencrantz" will explore the changing roles of women in American society through the lives and experiences of the women at the Hermitage, March 27. As you walk through the house, you'll hear about these compelling characters and witness the impact their decisions and passions left on the Hermitage.

Thielke Arboretum: Build a *rain barrel workshop* to save water took place in February. One rain barrel can help save 1,400 gallons of water from April through October. The arboretum and the NJ Watershed Ambassadors will sponsor a *rain garden event* on March 30th featuring family friendly science experiments and demonstrations, guided tours and environment friendly gardening practices.

Veterans Home Project The veterans began winter sowing using plastic milk jugs to create small greenhouses as an indoor horticultural therapy project.

Burlington –

The Master Gardeners of Burlington County kicked off the New Year by welcoming our 2019 intern class. Their classes will culminate in April/May with helpline training and an overview of our various projects. The members of our speaker's bureau have been busy with a series of talks at the Moorestown Library as well as other engagements.

We joined Rowan College at Burlington County for an heirloom seed distribution at the Burlington County Lyceum of History and Natural Sciences. MG's at our "Ask the Master Gardener" table provided gardening information to those attending this event.

Project Reports:

Gardens at Burlington County Fair Grounds – Many of our master gardeners are excited to start this new project. Our first meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 29th. We will survey the planting areas, develop a garden design and plant list. Focus will be on incorporating Roy Diblik's concepts of developing perennial plant patterns and Brie Arthur's food scaping.

Butterfly Garden at Smith Woods – Orders have been placed for new host and nectar plants as well as maintenance tools and shed items. Several MG's have started seeds. The county built a new raised bed to try and deter groundhogs and moles from eating the plants. A walk-through and clean-up is scheduled for the last Wednesday of March.

Donation Garden at Medford Leas – To date, the group has had two planning meetings, planted peas and mulched the walking paths. More to follow as weather permits.

IPM and Demonstration Plots at BCCAC – The results of our planning meeting are to grow strawberries, hops, blueberries, barley, beans, salvias, flax, purple millet and the three sisters in our demonstration plots. The Barley and flax seed are scheduled for planting early April. The seven raised beds will be devoted to succulents, annuals, ferns, a butterfly and hummingbird gardens. Annuals and herbs will be planted in the farmhouse garden.

Medicinal/Culinary Colonial-Era Garden at Pineland Preservation Alliance - The planning for the Medicinal/Culinary Colonial-Era Garden at the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA) headquarters is forging on, although the actual work is just a gleam in the eyes of the team members, at least until spring

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is truly upon us. Basic research is completed and the PPA is going ahead with its plans to redo the grounds at its headquarters, which include this Master Gardeners project. In the meantime, one team member stratified seeds for native medicinal plants in his refrigerator over the winter (leading his wife to comment that every time she opened the fridge his seeds would spill on the ground, which he considered to be a very biblical statement) and planted them in small flats on March 8. These include items such as wood betony, bloodroot, boneset, among a few others. We hope to start the project in earnest with the good weather and foresee this as a multi-year effort.

Pinelands Preservation Alliance Kitchen Garden – A thank you luncheon and planning meeting is scheduled for April 2nd. The meeting will cover the pollinator garden as well as coordinating our projects with the landscaper for PPA's new landscaping plans.

Rancocas Nature Center – No report

Upcoming Events:

- Quarterly Meeting - Tuesday, April 16, 2019
- Plant/Garden Expo – Saturday, May 11, 2019

Camden –

Horticulture School: There are 30 new interns signed up for the horticulture school classes. Greenhouse - Seedlings planted in January and February are growing very well with many now up potted in "sale ready" containers. Propagated plants are doing extremely well with flowers budding, and opportunities of more cuttings available. We have begun planting some vegetables, including eggplant and pepper which require an earlier seeding period. County plants have also arrived in plug form and planted in 4-inch pots for beautifying local parks. Our goal is to ensure those plants are taken out from the greenhouse in a timelier fashion this year to ensure we have a clean facility for the fall fair. Support for the current and new Master Gardeners have been excellent, which has made our ability to run the operation more smoothly.

Make and Take - The February Orchid Make and Take was a success with excellent reviews provided. There will be an April Butterfly Garden/Rain Gauge Make and Take program, with Linda Hurd presenting the function. Each participate will walk away with a perennial plant and a rain gauge.

Publicity - The team has successfully provided outreach for the two Make and Take programs, and the upcoming Green Garden Fair

Programs- On February 19 there was a talk on the Pine Barrens by Ron Smith. There is another general meeting scheduled for March 19 featuring a talk but Shane Hardy, Grasslands Manager at the Stone Barnes Center for Food and Agriculture.

Green Garden Fair. The fair is scheduled for April 27th

Educational Committee: The group has finalized new garden ideas and finalized three educational talks to be held in the gardens.

Outreach: The outreach committee is busy lining up several talks and visits to local community events

Cumberland:

Horticulture Enrichment

They will be planting succulent gardens to add some greenery to their rooms.

Community Outreach

Will be reaching out to different schools for spring activities

Bayshore Planting Project

Bivalve project committee got together with CU to work out a plan to do a planting of Natives on site. The propagation team will be growing them.

Propagation

We are in full swing getting ready for our plant sale. Growing a lot of Natives, pollinator plants & tomatoes.

Trips

Planning an overnight to FDR's home.

Flower Show trip was sold out.

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Classes we have had since we are not having a MG class

All about Lavender, Soils, Basic Gardening

Upcoming

Yoga in the Garden, Down Jersey Vegetables, Morning Star Daylilies & Overview of Food Safety.

Essex –

Message from our President's desk

The annual report for 2018 was recently submitted to the state and we are pleased to report that our total number of volunteer hours increased by 389 hours. Our total in 2018 was 11,265 hours of service. At \$25 per hour, the value of our hard work in Essex County was \$281,625.

Master Gardeners of Essex County 2019 Meeting Schedule and Speakers:

Date	Speaker	Subject
4/13/2019	Sharon Carey	GARDENS WITH WINGS
5/11/2019	No Meeting	PLANT SALE
6/8/2019	NJSCS	KNOW AND GROW CHRYSANTHEMUMS
7/13/2019	NJ Tree Foundation	RIGHT TREE RIGHT PLACE
10/12/2019	Dorothy Smullen	BLUES IN THE GARDEN

Around the County

Work will begin in the Rose Garden in Brookdale Park on Thursday morning March 21. It's time to clean off our tools, shovels and hoes with alcohol and oil and sharpen the tools. I've begun ordering Epsom salts, pre-emergent applications for crabgrass and perennial lawn weeds. Time to clean out the sprayer for dormant oil and deer spray. We will rake off the beds and assess for winter and deer damage. Time to get outside again. We won't go out if the weather is too cold. Two pair of socks are always helpful. The enormous job of pruning is so daunting in early March, but we do very well with our Master Gardener friends and co-workers. Come join us in the Rose Garden on Thursday mornings. No experience or even tools necessary. It's an amazing process to go from dormant frozen twigs to the glorious blooms of June. Susan Jankolovits sjankolovits@hotmail.com

The "Glenmont Project, 2019" is starting its 11th year as a Master Gardener service project. For those not familiar with Glenmont, it is the historic home of Thomas and Mina Edison located in the Thomas Edison National Historical Park. TENHP is part of the National Park Service and is the only Master Gardener service program in New Jersey affiliated with the national government. While Edison's lab and museum are up the street, Glenmont, his historic home, is in Llewellyn Park, the oldest gated community in the country. The Master Gardeners have developed a service project to restore many of the gardens outside and around the mansion. We operate primarily from March to November, with work completed as though these were our own gardens.

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First up is March. Last November, Master Gardeners dug up, cleaned, and stowed dozens of canna rhizomes in the storage room of the Glenmont greenhouse. Within the next two weeks, we will be potting up the rhizomes and begin the process of growing the cannas to be planted sometime in May, usually after Mother's Day.

Also in March, we will be clearing the sites of dead winter plantings and greens, pruning back buddleia bushes that have been there since Edison's time, clearing out the antique planters around the mansion and the greenhouse, and just generally cleaning up the sites as we would our own gardens in anticipation of Spring. Plans also need to be finalized for new plantings around the various sites, including those at the Edison's' gravesites.

We will be meeting in the mornings at 9:30 on Wednesdays and Thursdays and other days of the week as the gardening tasks dictate. If interested in becoming part of wonderful fulfilling project, even on a limited basis, please email me to be added to the distribution list. Also, send your phone numbers. Amy Trimarco, aatrimarco@comcast.net, 201-600-8656 (C)

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CLASS SCHEDULE FOR 2019

DATE	PLACE	TOPIC	LECTURER
3/5/2019	BBP	Integrated Pest Management	Madeline DiNardo
3/12/2019	TBZ	Intro. To Basic Landscape Design	Brian Oleksak
3/19/2019	WAYNE	Pestic de Safety & Use (6 core credits)	Pat Hastings, RCE/New Brunswick
3/26/2019	TBZ	Intro. To Plant Pathology	Rich Buckley, Rutgers Plant Diagnostic Lab
4/2/2019	Garibaldi	Trees	Nick Polanin
4/9/2019	Garibaldi	Fruit Trees in the Home Garden	Megan Muehlbauer
4/16/2019	Garibaldi	Diseases & Pests of Vegetables	Peter Nitzsche, RCE/Morris
4/23/2019	Garibaldi	Perennials	Sonia Uyterhoeven, Greenwood Gardens
4/30/2019	Garibaldi	Growing Fruit in the Garden	Hemantkumar Gohil, County Agent
5/7/2019	BBP	Wildlife in the garden	Elaine Fogerty
5/14/2019	BBP	Volunteering	Hashaam Jamil, Jersey Cares
5/21/2019	BBP	Broadleaf Evergreens	Steven Kristoph
5/28/2019	BBP	Final Exam/Evaluations/Program Wrap Up	Jan Zientek

- BBP** Branch Brook Park - Cherry Blossom Center
- TBZ** Turtle Back Zoo - 560 Northfield Ave, West Orange, NJ
- WAYNE** Public Safety Academy 300 Oldham Rd, Wayne, 07470.
- Garibaldi** Garibaldi Hall, Essex County Environmental Center, 621A Eagle Rock Ave. Roseland



Route 3 West to Route 46 West
Make a right unto Union Boulevard (Turns into Union Avenue)
Go to Preakness Avenue
Make a left onto Preakness Avenue
*** Take** Preakness Avenue to the very top of the hill. Turn right onto Oldham Road – follow Oldham Road to sign for Passaic County Public Safety Academy "Kattak Parkway", on right side approximately 1.5 miles.

www.mgessex.org

Horticulture Workshops for Seniors – Winter/Spring 2019

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SENIOR CITIZENS OF ESSEX COUNTY YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN HORTICULTURE WORKSHOPS PRESENTED BY THE RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS OF ESSEX COUNTY

APRIL 15 Raising Rhizomes, Plant Roots & Shoots that Travel Underground

MAY 20 Arranging Spring Flowers

ALL PROGRAMS TAKE PLACE ON MONDAYS, 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.
 GARIBALDI HALL, 621A EAGLE ROCK AVE., ROSELAND
 PROGRAMS ARE FREE. RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE EARLY.
 SPACE IS LIMITED. WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT RESERVATIONS
 ONCE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IS REACHED!

MGEC Volunteer Hub – Weather and Season Permitting

MGEC VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	
<p>The Brookdale Pruners hope to be back in action in the beginning of April, weather permitting. We still have openings for more MGers who want to prune, learn to prune, and help remove invasives in the Park. We meet Wednesdays from 9-11am. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Pat Hewitt at hewitt36@verizon.net.</p> <p>The Caldwell Pollinator Garden, containing only native plants, enters its fourth year this spring. The garden was grown on a site which previously had a building on it, so the progress was spread out over a period of time to clean up the construction debris and recondition the soil. As we near the completion of laying out the original design which incorporated a meadow surrounded by gardens created for specific pollinators, the tasks lying ahead of us include planting in a small undeveloped area, replacing any dead plants, cleaning up the gardens of plant litter, pruning trees, re-seeding the meadow, and regular maintenance through the growing season. In November, about a third of the meadow was hacked down and the remainder will be cut in March. It is with anticipation that all those previously involved in the project await the garden to renew itself this spring. The work will begin in April and we will contact all those who have volunteered in the past as to the dates. We welcome any new volunteers to contact me at 973-226-6246 or wmarchioni39@gmail.com</p> <p>The Brookdale Park Monarch Waystation/Pollinator Garden got off to a great start last year and will be expanded this season. New native plants will be added, including 3 more</p>	<p>PLANT SALE 2019 The dates for the Plant Sale at Presby Memorial Iris Garden will be Friday, May 3rd and Saturday, May 4th. The Roseland sale will be on Saturday, May 11th. Not too far away, is it!!</p> <p>In order to familiarize yourselves with the plants prior to the sale, we put the list up on the website giving you an opportunity to look up the “needs – soil, light requirements, etc.” of the plants so you are ready to share them with our customers.</p> <p>We have some plants that are now available for you to look up for that kind of information.</p> <p>Some are as follows:</p> <p>SHRUBS: Cephalanthus occidentalis, Clethra alnifolia, Cornus sericea, and Rosa carolinia.</p> <p>PERENNIALS: Chelone glabra, Gentiana clausa, Helianthus divaricatus, Lobelia siphililica, Monarda fistulosa.</p> <p>As we go along, we will be adding to this list. Have fun with it. Who’s the best pollinator? Who produces the best berries and seeds for birds? How about the</p>

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varieties of milkweed, and monitoring this milkweed for the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project will resume in the late spring. We meet weekly on Tuesday mornings, 9-11:30 and will begin sometime in April. Help is always welcome! Contact Jean Greeley if interested - jgreeley743@gmail.com.

Horticulture for Seniors meets once a month, usually on the 3rd Monday (January & February the 4th Monday) of the month, from September through June. Master Gardeners come to help set-up for the day's program at 11:30 A.M and the seniors arrive at 1 P.M. The program runs until 3 P.M. and covers a topic related to plants, gardening or the environment. The topic may be covered by a speaker, a PowerPoint presentation or discussion.

A take-home project is always planned, and refreshments are served. Come and join us, contact Amy Trimarco aatrimarco@comcast.net.

The Greenhouse is up and running. We will be calling for volunteers as our plants make themselves ready for transplanting. Watering crews are attending to the plants daily.

We will be calling for volunteers to plant tomato seeds in March. Watch for weekly announcements as to our needs. Normal Greenhouse hours are Mondays from 10am-noon.

It seems impossible but our first date in **The Brookdale Park Rose Garden** is Thursday March 21. Wear garden gloves and sharpen your loppers and pruners. Wear two pairs of socks and watch the weather forecast. We'll only meet if the temperature is in the 40's. Sjankolovits@hotmail

butterflies, bees, humming- birds? Which plants are the best for them?

This is the time get to know some of the plants before the sale! Enjoy it!

The Plant Sale Committee Helen Stack hasveron@comcast.net

Branch Brook Park Volunteer opportunities

We are anxious to start the season at Branch Brook Park and look forward to seeing the park's wonderful cherry tree collection in full bloom in April. There are two ways that you can participate at the park during the year and we would love to see you!!

Weekly Master Gardener Work Sessions

Every Monday morning we meet at the Prudential Concert Grove (at the south end of the park) to work in one of four areas in the Southern Section -*Music Court, Kiyofumi Sakaguchi Memorial Grove, the Boat House or Concourse Hill*. Under the direction of chief horticulturist Ralph Zika, we prune, weed, control invasives, mulch, or cultivate the many perennials and shrubs that make up these gardens. All tools are provided, just bring your gloves and water. We generally work either rain or shine (except if under 40 degrees and over 90 degrees)

We will begin Monday March 25. Hours are from 9:30 until 12:30. Please meet at the education building which is located alongside the lake off of Branch Brook drive near the restrooms. Use in maps "branch brook park roller rink" to get near this area.

Volunteer Workdays

We also host volunteer days for corporate and collegiate organizations throughout the season. This is an opportunity to teach others what you know so well. You will typically lead a group of 6-10 volunteers along with another master gardener in the task at hand. This could be weeding, pruning, deadheading, tidying up tree rings, or distributing mulch to mention a few.

The upcoming volunteer workdays are:

Saturday, March 30 9:00-12:30

Monday April 22 9:00-1:00

Friday April 26 9:00-12:30 morning session

Friday, April 26 1:00-4:39 afternoon session

Mary, maryjed@optonline.net

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Save The Date

APRIL 25 – 28	NJ Flower & Garden Show
May 3 & 4	Plant Sale at Presby Memorial Iris Gardens
May 11	Plant Sale at Garibaldi Hall

Hunterdon –

Our teams are gearing up for the Spring season. Our Helpline opens April 1 for the season. Our 2019 class of new Master Gardeners graduates April 16.

Mercer –

During 2018, Mercer County RMG's volunteered a total of 16,444 hours, and in addition had 2,965 hours of CE training. Since Barbara Bromley was retiring in the fall, and a new coordinator had not yet been hired, no new class was started, and several advanced training classes were provided by Meredith Melendez for RMG's to fulfill their CE requirements. These included a class on invasive species on January 3, a class on cut flowers on Feb. 28, and a winter tree ID class at Rutgers Gardens on March 9.

We are reviewing our bylaws and long term plan this spring.

We will continue supporting on a school enrichment program on "Where Does Food Come From" for 3rd and 4th graders in the public schools. This program reached 375 students last year. We are also supporting a 4-H summer camps program on food and healthy eating that includes herbs, cooking and sends the campers home with recipes.

In February, a special food drive was held to restock food pantries that benefited furloughed federal employees.

On February 26, a program on New Jersey Ecosystems at Risk, specifically the Pinelands, was held in collaboration with The Watershed Institute.

On June 8, there will be a tour of several RMG's gardens, along with three public gardens.

On March 16, our annual Symposium was held at Stuart Country Day School. It featured 4 speakers, book sales, book signings by three of the speakers, and door prizes donated by several vendors and RMG's.. Eight more Community Education programs are planned for the rest of 2019. In early March, the move to our new office was finally complete, and we held our first monthly meeting there on March 4. There are more tasks to finish, but it is more spacious and open than the old Extension office on Spruce St. Not only do we have a new office, but at the March meeting, Meredith Melendez introduced the new Mercer County Horticulturist and RMG coordinator, Margaret Pickoff.

Middlesex – No report

Monmouth –

Monmouth County started the year with the installation of new Trustees. In January our Speakers Bureau vetted programs that will be given at our Home Garden Symposium in March. In February there were three more vettings for presentations that could be added to those already available. Topics added were: Herbs, terrarium gardens, attracting butterflies to your garden and the care and maintenance of hydrangeas.

Starting off the month of February, a day trip to the Ag. Building was taken by 20 third graders from one of Red Bank's Charter Schools. Arranged and set up by our School Programs Committee, 9 learning stations were placed around the building to teach the students about garden topics. Such as bees and

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pollinators, water purification, making paper and using flower parts as crayons were featured, just to mention a few. A video about Monarch Butterflies was also shown and a follow-up discussion took place. Students and staff had a very enjoyable experience! February also welcomed 31 new interns. A Welcome Breakfast was held on February 21st with lots of fabulous goodies to dazzle the newcomers and to break the ice! Our new interns have already started planning the layout and making their choice of produce to be grown in the PAR!

February has also been our kick-off for the Junior Master Gardener Program which will have its first class on April 27th with 18 new 9 to 11-year olds. The Program lasts 8 Saturdays with the first half of the time spent inside doing classroom type learning then, after a snack break, all go out to the JMG garden and work for the rest of the time. Mentors are assigned to students for class time and others assigned out in the garden. Two children share a plot with nine plots in the JMG garden. After the Program is completed, the children are welcomed and encouraged to come back to the JMG garden on Saturday mornings to weigh and harvest their produce as well as weed and plant more seeds. Prior to the County Fair, produce is chosen and weighed for the Fair as entries. In the past, our Junior Master Gardeners have done very well in the "ribbon" department!

In addition, in the past two months we have been included in the county Facebook page with timely gardening information to help the local gardener. We are very excited about being able to disperse information that is pertinent for that month/season and hope that it is well received. Also, it seems that we are traversing into the 21st century by using on-line registration and for getting information out about our scholarship and application as well as our many upcoming events. It looks like electronic voting is coming for future elections.

March has livened up our Helpline with many calls, probably due to the warmer days we are experiencing! March 30th we will hold our 4th Annual Home Garden Symposium where all speakers will be Master Gardeners. There will be four major presentations during the day with a Q & A and two other shorter demonstrations during the lunch period. It should be an information-packed day for all attending!

Outside in the gardens, bulbs and garlic are peeking through the soil and we will soon be doing a good spring clean-up!

Morris – Speakers Bureau: The Speakers Bureau has again over fifty presentations scheduled for 2019 with more requests still coming in. They also will be having a presentation in March, for Rutgers Master Gardeners to socialize and attain a CEU. These presentations are becoming increasingly more popular with Rutgers Master Gardeners.

Talks & Conferences: Morris County held its 9th Annual Community Garden Conference on March 2, 2019. This is a joint venture between the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County and the Frelinghuysen Arboretum. The conference was attended by over 150 people and was sold out. Plans are in the works for a larger venue to accommodate all those who are interested.

Plant Sale: We have all of our interns signed-up to volunteer at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum's annual plant sale. This is usually the first opportunity for the current interns to volunteer. The Plant sale is from April 29, through May 5, 2019 and all are welcome.

Helpline: Began on Monday April 1, 2019.

Rutgers Master Gardener classes: Our 20 interns have only three classes left and are anxiously awaiting volunteer opportunities to share their new-found knowledge.

Snyder Farm: Two WPS (worker protection standard) training classes were given in March, which is mandatory training for working in the greenhouses or in the fields at Snyder Farm. Additional classes will be scheduled and posted in the near future.

Projects We are currently working on many new projects for this year and we will announce them when they are finalized.

Ocean –

Our season is getting off to a fine start.

Community Outreach Events committee members are busy updating our display boards, creating 2 new ones, and arranging MG coverage for many festivals and events throughout the county this season. Helpline and Tick Lab opened for a.m. services as of last week. Training was offered to MGs. Interns, now halfway through their classes, will be trained in April.

New this year, the Diagnostic Committee has expanded and will be working in conjunction with Outreach tables and greeting residents at our front counter. Two training sessions were given Mar. 11th. The

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Calendar girls gathered the articles for the 2020 issue. They are being reviewed by a horticulturalist who is a MG alumnus.

Our two greenhouses are in full swing, one growing specialty annuals and the other veggies, all for our plant sale. The Display Garden in front of the Ag. Center had its first cleanup session. The Speakers' Bureau gave seven talks and has 25 more scheduled for the 2019 season.

We had another successful Philly Garden Show trip in spite of the original bus company going bankrupt. Another company was able to provide the two buses needed at the last minute.

The Spotted Lantern Fly project is underway. A group has been checking for stands of the Tree of Heaven, the host plant for the spotted lantern fly, and documenting their location. They will continue monitoring for egg cases and SLF throughout the year.

Passaic – No report

Somerset– Our Speakers' Bureau has held 2 full-house classes in March on basic vegetable gardening, with 2 more scheduled. Other topics, such as butterfly and herb gardens, are on the calendar for later this spring. Co-chairs Linda Lewis and Tom Reeder are looking for more presentations to be created by our members with special expertise. The county newsletter, Facebook and other online tools as well as traditional print materials are increasing public awareness for our events & classes.

In December, Somerset County Master Gardeners displayed nature-themed trees at the Festival of Trees at Lord Stirling Park and Somerset County 4H Center.

Also in December, the Ways & Means Committee sponsored a bus trip to Longwood Gardens. Participants were awed by the sight of the magnificent displays. Although this was a fund-raiser, many gathered ideas for their own decorations.

Plans for a teaching garden are proceeding now that the county has approved our plans and a fence is to be installed. Master Gardeners worked to clear part of the area to receive plants from the original Mary's Garden on Beekman Lane. Most of the plants from the Hillsborough site have been moved. Once the weather improves, the rest will be transplanted for use in demonstrations and plant sales.

Our Whiton (Branchburg) and Pine Grove (Franklin Twp.) Schools teams are preparing for another successful year. Student and staff response continue to be enthusiastic and supportive. Our education outreach will again extend to participation in the Hillside School, Bridgewater Forrest Fest.

Graduation for the RMGSC Class of '19 will be held April 8 for the 14 very enthusiastic members. They have been participating in many activities beyond the usual class work.

Our Helpline Team held special training sessions to reinforce the procedures for email inquiries and record keeping.

With Earth Day fast approaching, Linda Sims, our Community Outreach leader has scheduled volunteers for various town events including street fairs and farmers' markets.

Every two months, a very colorful and informative newsletter is delivered via email to all RMGSC Master Gardeners. The March/April issue included 2 pages of "Out & About" special lectures and tours.

RMGSC has a new team reaching out especially to seniors at local senior centers. An herb planting session was held at Quail Brook Senior Center with more than 20 eager participants.

Another new team aims to acquaint RMGSC folks with local gardens and events by organizing "car-pool/drive yourself" treks to places/events within about a 1 hr. drive of the 4H Center. The first trip was to a Saturday program on butterfly gardening. Future treks are scheduled to Rutgers, Buck and Presby Iris Gardens, and to the Keyport Garden Walk.

Sussex – Lisa Chiariello, Sussex County MG Coordinator, has been appointed as a full-time resource to the RCE, which will be a real benefit to Master Gardener and other programs in Sussex County. She is
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currently nailing down a date for Emerald Ash Borer training for all municipalities in Sussex county. She is hoping to offer the training the first week of April but has not as yet confirmed the date. This training will be available for all MGs that are willing to drive to Sussex County Community College in Newton, NJ to attend it, not just Sussex MGs. Lisa will notify everyone as soon as arrangements have been confirmed.

The idea is that MGs can take the training and then use their expertise to assist their own municipalities with tree inventory or public awareness outreach. We have an area in Sussex county, an epicenter of sorts (Sparta) that is the worst the NJ DEP specialist has seen across the state for EAB infestation and destruction of ash. That's why we are trying to mobilize MGs (+ Environmental Stewards to help their communities. It has also been identified in Montague and Wantage. In some places in our county 40% of the trees in the plant community are ash. This is going to have a severe impact as the insect infestation spreads. We haven't seen anything on this level of loss of trees since the chestnut blight of 1904.

Our current MG Ed training class has 38 students and it is given to both MG Interns and the public. It is a hybrid traditional classroom/prerecorded webinar content class, using SAKAI to manage access to resources and deliver testing.

We purchased a new microscope that has a tablet on it which makes it easier to show helpline clients what is going on with their specimens that they submit for analysis. In addition, it can broadcast images to user's devices through Wi-Fi, so people can see what is on the microscope on their own phone, tablet or laptop (when they are using the microscope's WIFI signal). It also has a camera, so we can take photos of diseases and insects. We expect we will be able to create some great programming and educational materials with this fantastic new tool.

The RCE Demonstration garden is now fenced at its new location on the RCE office property. Building of raised beds and walkways should commence in the spring.

We are working on expanding our educational outreach programming at the NJ State Fair and Sussex County Farm and Horse Show during the 10-day fair in August. The Fair Ag Division President asked RCE to take over all of the education programs ourselves (rather than them doing some and us doing some). We will be doing public talks using local speakers as well as MGs and RCE staff, daily at 2 PM, with the exception of the first and last days of the fair. The educational focus will be on our top helpline questions: Emerald Ash Borer + Spotted Lantern Fly, Native & Invasive Species, and Growing Vegetables. We are going to have a "veggie of the day" education offering on each of the 10 days of the fair. We are collaborating with the veggie show staff, who running their program in the greenhouse next door to our assigned areas.

Union –

CONTINUING EDUCATION: A Passionate Look at the World of Bonsai, March 20, 7:30-9pm in the RCE Meeting Room, Westfield. Mike Humphrey has been doing bonsai for over 40 years, as a hobbyist and a professional. His passion started in England and was on the boards of many bonsai clubs and societies. His plan is to bring a few trees, discuss basic bonsai knowledge, demonstrate more advanced design techniques, and try to give a sense of how to achieve a good bonsai.

The documentary screening of "Living Soil: A Documentary for All of Us" from the Soil Health Institute (<https://livingsoilfilm.com/>) was supposed to be on February 20 but was cancelled due to snow.

November 28, 2018, Tina Helmstetter from the Great Swamp Greenhouses, demonstrated the creation of evergreen holiday designs with thirty-eight attendees participating.

DEMONSTRATION GARDEN: **Sharing Garden, Annex, Herb Garden** and **Berry Patch** donated a total of 1338lb. of fresh produce to various agencies in 2018. There were 45lb. coming from the **Berry Patch**, and 32lb. from the **Herb Garden**. The Demo Garden cleanup was on Nov. 10, with the help of Cranford Scouts and their parents. The County Tree Crew has trimmed trees. All the plastic lumber has been purchased and cut to size in the greenhouse for the Herb Garden raised beds.

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SPRING GARDEN FAIR: Fair planning meeting was held on January 20. Two pre-orders have been received for the plant sale. Sunday, May 19, 12 to 4pm. will include: Square Foot gardening display and square foot gardening books for sale; Union County MG Helpline table, and soil test kits for sale; Hydroponics display from Groundworks Elizabeth; Horticultural Therapy providing a Children's Activity; Rutgers' Master Tree Stewards display and a Children's Activity.

HELPLINE: Met with the new class on December 4, 2018. December 10 was a pot-luck Holiday Party. The Helpline closed for the Holiday period from 12/22/18 to 1/6/19. The Tuesday and Thursday shifts will return on March 19 and March 21, 2019.

HORTICULTURAL THERAPY: A six-week session with Jardine Academy in Cranford from Feb. 13 – March 20. Volunteers will work with the children on projects such as dried flower arrangements, planting seeds, leaf decoupage, and terrariums..

COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION: The Westfield Food Pantry Garden has been added as a project. Their binder has been updated on the website.

NEW CLASS: Coordinated a lovely Holiday Party on December 4, 2018 at The Presbyterian Church Westfield, with sixty-seven people in attendance. The leftover food was donated to the church. March 12 was the job fair for the Demo Garden plots. March 19 will be Committee Chairs job fair.

EXECUTIVE BOARD: Three meetings were held December 5, February 6, and March 6. Bylaws were reviewed as required with no revisions and approved as of December 5, 2018. Current Bylaws, Nomination Procedures and Election of Offices, request for two State Representatives Alternates, and Continuing Education were posted on the website. Website training program was held for new online access. Outgoing Executive Board officers sent a "Welcome letter packet" and the President sent packet to the New Class Representatives. Summit Library held a volunteer open house March 9 from 1 to 3 pm that had material from Master Gardeners, Master Tree Stewards, and Environmental Stewards. Madeline suggested maintaining a traveling showcase of materials to publicize these programs at other events.

CORRESPONDECE: Thank you notes were received from the Food Pantry of First Presbyterian, Congregation of Connecticut Farms in Union, and Brownie Troop 40710, and condolences letters sent.

TREASURER: An auditor's report will be provided per the Bylaws.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 12:20. The next meeting is 4/11/2019.

Respectfully Submitted
Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary