

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of October 8, 2020 RMGANJ Meeting

Deirdre Gallagher called the Webex meeting to order at 9:05 am. Pat Schanzlin welcomed the group to the meeting. Deirdre welcomed the new faces: Keiko Warner from Cumberland and Diane Muenzin from Morris.

Secretary's Minutes from September 2020 RMGANJ Meeting: Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary, reported that she had emailed out version 2 of the September RMGANJ minutes after receiving some changes to the county reports. A motion to accept version 2 of the minutes was made, seconded and approved.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	
Bergen:	Karen Pennell
Burlington:	Merry Bogert, Nick Hendershot
Camden:	Tom Gurenlian
Cumberland:	Betsey Simpson, Keiko Warner
Essex:	Terry Felper; Alice Poueymirou
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering, Dewey Goodman
Mercer:	Judy Colburn, Betty Scarlata, Sudi Solomon
Middlesex:	Jerri Barclay, Kathy Dopart
Monmouth:	Bob Magovern, Bill Schutte
Morris:	Deirdre Gallagher, Diane Muenzin
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane, Roberta Quinn
Passaic:	Joe D'Errico, Peter Rauschenbach,
Somerset:	Linda Madretzke
Sussex:	Pat Schanzlin
Union:	
Rutgers University:	Jan Zientek

TREASURER'S REPORT: Roberta Quinn, Treasurer, reported that the current balance is \$14,018.30 which is no change from the prior month. A motion to accept was made, seconded and approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Deirdre Gallagher reported on Old Business below.

MASTER GARDENER'S COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Jan Zientek reported that Rutgers University Policy regarding the pandemic continues the prohibition of non-essential, in person events by Rutgers faculty, staff and volunteers through winter 2021 and until further notice.

There is new leadership at the Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education (OCPE), Dr. Mark Robson is now faculty director.

They are moving forward with Master Gardener curriculum development on Canvas (online platform); review of curriculum by Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) faculty is targeted for December.

Deirdre Gallagher brought up the issue of whether we should move to Zoom rather than Webex. Jan reported that Rutgers has both Webex and Zoom licenses. The members of his county prefer Zoom, they find it easier to use. Zoom also has some additional features, like the ability to have breakout groups, that might be useful for the conference. There was no further discussion from the group.

New Business

Old Business

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Nominating Committee: Karen Pennell reported on the status of the nominating committee. It has been difficult to identify nominees with so many new members and no in-person meetings. She asked meeting attendees to turn on their video and put their actual name in the system to help the nominating team. They are having a particular problem filling the Recording and Corresponding Secretary positions. If anyone is interested they should contact Karen at pennellfamily@gmail.com or Jerri Barclay at jerribarclay@me.com. Tricia Deering suggested eliminating the Corresponding Secretary role and merging its responsibilities into the other positions. In practice, the responsibilities are not operating as described in the bylaws. According to the bylaws “the Corresponding Secretary shall maintain a mailing list, including delegates, alternates and appropriate RCE and Rutgers personnel. She/he will disseminate agendas and minutes of the monthly Board meetings and other documents of use to the Association, to be posted on the designated Rutgers website”. In practice the Corresponding Secretary is posting Association documents on Sakai and all other responsibilities are handled by other board members.

There was a suggestion to switch to a leadership committee model. There would still be a board but it would have more members than the current board and the members would not have the traditional titled roles. RMGANJ meetings would be run by a convener. Roles would still be assigned, but they would be more fluid. A member might be designated to attend the coordinators meetings. Switching to this new model would require a bylaw change.

Pat Schanzlin commented that she felt that it is worth exploring what a “leadership committee” model would look like. She suggested coming up with a proposal to vote on by the end of next year. We would still have elections for the current positions and they could transition into the leadership committee if it was agreed to.

Conference Planning: Deirdre Gallagher reported that Dave Parsons is stepping down from his role as head of the conference planning committee. This was followed by considerable discussion on the conference.

Jan reported that they are encouraging Master Gardeners to stay engaged with continuing education and the program in general even though there are no CE requirements. He feels there may be more of a leadership role with respect to the conference for the coordinators going forward. Perhaps there will be a different purpose for this conference.

There was discussion of waiting for the fall vs. May; some believe May is ambitious and we should wait until the fall. Joe D’Errico suggested having one webinar in May to help keep interest up and keep Master Gardeners engaged. Joe will look into it and come up with a proposal for what to do in May for the next meeting.

The idea of a quarterly newsletter to facilitate communication among the counties was suggested. One thought is to share the existing county newsletters across all the counties. Jan suggested that the state web site might be used as a platform. He will look into it.

Diane Muenzin asked whether the Master Gardener Conference is for the public or just Master Gardeners (answer – Master Gardeners). She suggested the idea of a trip around NJ – videos of Master Gardener gardens around the state would be fun and a way to keep gardeners engaged.

There was discussion on the conference committee – who is on it, what is their role – core team vs. county reps. Terry Felper will clarify who is on the committee and what their roles are for the next meeting.

Bylaws Committee: Deirdre Gallagher reported on the Bylaws Committee. Since the issue of the Leadership Committee model has come up and would require bylaws changes, the updates are now pending a decision on the leadership committee idea.

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Caring and Sharing:

Keiko Warner reported on a way her county raised money to donate to families in need. Diane Muenzin reported on the annual community garden conference.

COUNTY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

Atlantic – no report.

Bergen

We held our first MG virtual meeting on Sept. 22 via Zoom. Frank “The Beeman” Mortimer gave an online presentation titled Honey – From Flower to Tummy. Frank is an adjunct instructor in the Cornell University Master Beekeeping Program, has been president of the Northeast NJ Beekeepers Association, is vice president of the NJ State Beekeepers Association, and is a certified master beekeeper. He’s the author of the upcoming Bee People and the Bugs They Love (available in March 2021) and has written articles for Bee Culture Magazine.

Our wonderful writers and editor continue to produce the newsletter each month with articles of interest and notifications of online webinars.

All volunteer sites are closed per RCE policy.

Burlington – no report

Camden

The following are taking place:

Continued Weekly Webex Check-ins.

Continued Weekly Webex book club meetings: Current Book: Bringing Nature Home by Douglas W. Tallamy

Continued Utilizing RC Extension Online Programs: RU Ready to Garden
Soil Lectures Series
And others based on interest.

Cumberland

Master Gardener: Highlights for September 2020

- Offer research based educational opportunities to the MG’s from a variety of resources; the majority of these are free
- State Webex meetings include: Bi- Weekly MG Program Coordinators meetings
- Participated on team that submitted MG Policies & Procedures to Rutgers faculty for review and approval
- Garden photos submitted by MG’s were posted on Facebook
- Hosted MG Monthly meeting with 23 attendees

Home Horticulture: Highlights for September 2020

- 18 radio spots were recorded for POP 99.9 FM Power of Positivity
 - live-streams on Facebook and Comcast Channel 22
- 14 Facebook posts with 1126 reached and 179 engagements, per data retrieved from Facebook
 - “Reached” is the number of people who saw the content
 - “Engagements” is any action someone take
- Researched and provided recommendations for 16 inquiries from clients on the Helpline
- One 400 word article published in the Reminder on “Growing Garlic in the Home Garden”

Essex - no report.

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Hunterdon

The spotted lanternfly has generated numerous questions to our helpline.
Our backyard scientists have been active and continue to post great information on our social media site.
Our steering committee continues to meet via Webex.
Our high school special needs program is continuing to provide online material for the students.
Our fall Newsletter I ready for publication.
Our presentation team has been giving remote presentations.
The Anderson House team completed its on-line support for the season.
Continuing education programs have been arranged via Webex.

Mercer

We continue to hold Executive Board and General Meetings via Zoom. The next General Membership meeting is October 13.
The county horticulturalist has invited Mercer County master gardeners to co-host the monthly meetings with her – to build Zoom meeting hosting and administration skills among the master gardeners.
Helpline inquiries from the public continue to arrive steadily through email to the county horticulturalist. They are then posted on Canvas Virtual Helpline and Helpline Committee members research and our horticulturalist then responds.
Our county horticulturalist will be teaching a Princeton Adult School course (via Zoom): Home Gardening for Fall. The three-session course runs October 13-27. The course has been well-received: three open seats remain.
We continue to send information to our Constant Contact list. Our recent flyer was on timely tips for October gardening and sixteen online webinar opportunities. We continue to post on Facebook and Instagram with links to online webinars, current flowers in bloom and invasives.
Our Community Education committee is sponsoring a free Zoom presentation on October 14, 7:00 PM, entitled “The Pollinator Victory Garden – Winning the War on Pollinator Decline” presented by Kim Eierman. Visit mgofmc.org to register.

Middlesex

The one thing we have going on is the RU Ready 2 Garden fall webinar series happening every Thursday at 6:30pm (started Oct 1), featuring Master Gardeners on a variety of seasonal topics. All of the webinars are free and open to everyone. Interested participants can visit tinyurl.com/middlesexcountygrows For registration information.

Please see below for upcoming topics.

Thursday, October 8 6:30 pm - Roses and their Care Session 2

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e299a281b192dae6c6f64439d1a58d08b>

Thursday, October 15 6:30pm Growing Garlic Session 3

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e776fada5586410f152b6f30e3a0d8430>

Thursday, October 22 6:30 pm - Seasons End in the Flower Garden Session 4

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e3a61a64f48ce3fe3bfbdb4f6559420b82>

Thursday, October 29 6:30 pm - Drying Flowers & Herbs Session 5

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=ee0c468003b60e1cbf995e11eb2caa337>

Thursday, November 5 6:30 pm Indoor Seeding....Are You Prepared for 2021? Session 6

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e049d5f4696d35f7c4a0834861b302f6b>

Thursday, November 12 6:30 pm Lessons from a Virtual Tour of the EARTH Center Gardens
Session 7

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e2948653f45b2bfb33749f921acfe232f>

Thursday, November, 19 6:30 pm Caring for Indoor House Plants Session 8

<https://rutgers.webex.com/rutgers/onstage/g.php?MTID=e0eb269e005a62c283ec4ee52f2d9a0f8>

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Monmouth

Like most other counties, Monmouth has been quiet meeting via Webex monthly. However, in the past three weeks our Speakers Bureau has vetted two new presentations via Webex. Jane Zysk gave a fabulous talk on fall gardening entitled, "Sweater Weather: Keep Calm and Garden On!" Keeping with the fall theme, Sandy Wolfe gave us wonderful ideas for fall containers in her presentation entitled, "Fall Container Gardening" which included flowers as well as vegetables.

On September 16, 2020 we had a General Meeting via Webex. That morning, Steve Kristoph spoke to us about pollinators and their plants. There were 75 in attendance. It was good to hear and see our fellow MGs, if only from a distance...

As always, Estelle Lumer, our Garden Vision editor, continues to collect home photos and MG written articles for the next issue of our publication.

Be safe and well as we continue through this phase of the pandemic.

Morris

We are not able to Volunteer in person; all programs are operating remotely at this time.

Snyder Farm is still operating. Tomato Festival was help via ZOOM. The yacon plot and strawberry research is currently ongoing.

Demonstration bed at the Morristown Community Garden was planted and produced 15 lbs. of winter squash for the food bank.

Fact sheets are being updated and the Master Gardener curriculum and policy manuals are being updated.

Master Gardeners are encouraged to take advantage of the many Zoom programs online. County Office is open to the public on a limited basis. Samples can be accepted.

The Community Garden Conference will be held online this year. We are unable to meet at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum due to Covid-19. Date is March 6, 2020. The IPM Team will host a session and the Garden Coordinators will have a roundtable as usual. Food safety talk is planned, keynote speaker undetermined, Ask the Expert Zoom under review.

Dave Los has two remote projects he and others are working on. See MyImpactPage.

First is an Herbaceous Plant and Ornamental Grass spreadsheet on Excel.

Second is a project in conjunction with the Morris County Park Commission to help photograph and identify plants at the parks and to record Spotted Lanternfly sightings.

Helpline is operating remotely.

County MG Newsletter sent out 9/23/2020, December issue in progress.

FYI, No credits are needed this year and no hours and being recorded. No date has been set for 2019 class graduation.

Ocean

Ocean County Master Gardeners have been presenting online classes through our series "Know to Grow". There is one more on "Winter Interest" on Oct. 20th. The office has been fielding horticultural questions during this time. Our Outreach team leaders created a short video to be presented at a virtual "Ocean Fun Days" event. We resumed our General meeting schedule online in Sept. with about half our members participating

Passaic – no report

Somerset – no report

Sussex

Nothing to report. Sussex has suspended all activities.

Union – no report.

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ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 10:15 am. The next meeting is 11/12/2020 at 9 am by Webex.

Respectfully Submitted
Tricia Deering, Recording Secretary