

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of RMGANJ Meeting, September 8, 2022

Attendance:

Atlantic:	
Bergen:	Herb Arbeiter
Burlington:	Nick Hendershot, Tracy Kilmer
Cumberland:	Betsey Simpson, Keiko Warner
Essex:	Trina Ehntholt, Terry Felper
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering, Dewey Goodwin
Mercer:	Judy Colburn, Betty Scarlata, Sudi Solomon
Middlesex:	Jerri Barclay, Kathy Dopart
Monmouth:	Bill Schutte, Gayle Williams
Morris:	
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane, Roberta Quinn
Passaic:	
Somerset:	Cindy Hedin
Sussex:	
Union:	Deb Murphy
Rutgers University:	Nick Polanin

Nick Hendershot called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:01 am and welcomed the group to the meeting.

Secretary's Minutes from August 11, 2022 RMGANJ Meeting: Cindy Hedin, Recording Secretary, reported that she had emailed the August '22 RMGANJ minutes as compiled from information provided by Sharon Astorino. A motion to accept the minutes (with possible attendance and county report additions) was made, seconded and approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Roberta Quinn, Treasurer, reported that the current balance is \$14,383.30. She noted that the spreadsheet she received showed 73 registrations. A motion to accept was made, seconded and approved.

MASTER GARDENER'S COORDINATOR'S REPORT:

The conference is coming!!! Nick Polanin reported that 112 registrations have been received. He has not yet split the in-persons from the Zoomers. The building will be open by 7:45. Jerri Barclay, Kathy Dopart & Cindy Hedin have volunteered to take names at the door. Nick H. will be available also. Rutgers current Covid vaccination requires 2 shots and 2 boosters, but since there are problems about eligibility for the 2nd booster, we will accept a vaccination card and the person's word since the rules are fuzzy. Officially, we are not accepting walk-ins, but we won't turn folks away. Chairs for 150 will be set up in the conference room.

Three speakers are each allotted 1 hour & 15 minutes for presentation and Q & A. 15 minute breaks will follow the first 2 speakers. Refreshments are being arranged for, a count will be determined on the registration cut-off day. The sessions will be recorded and made available to registrants at a later date and for a limited period. Tech support will be available to assist Zoomers and monitor the Q&A. During screen sharing, the speaker's head will appear in a box on the screen. Closed captioning will be available.

Parking will be in lots #76 (the closest to the room), 99C & 99D. The campus is not crowded so parking should not be a problem. Gifts for the speakers will be honey from the Cream Ridge station. Nick P. will handle that. Nick H. questioned the usefulness of a full RMGANJ meeting on Oct. 13. The consensus was "No!" However, folks involved with the conference organizational details will have a brief meeting on Thurs., 10/13. Nick P. will coordinate this meeting.

Information on the speakers, Matt Elmore, Rebecca Magron & Brian Schilling, will be shared with all Master Gardeners via an email from Nick P. containing links to their web pages.

Nick H. will inform all coordinators that folks wishing to view the presentations at **a later date** should **register now** even though they will not be attending/Zooming on 10/15. Nick P. will double-check that the recording is locate-able, hence link-able.

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Jan Zientek retired as of September 1. Facebook postings show him playing miniature golf in Colorado with his children. Jan scored 2 holes in one.

There are two faculty positions in (ANR?) to be filled:

1. Somerset--Nick P.'s position
2. Morris—a long-vacant post in commercial & ornamental horticulture

Approval for a dedicated state-wide Master Gardener Co-ordinator has been requested of Chancellor Conway

New Business

Nick H. requested a copy of the by-laws. If you have a copy, would you please send him a copy?

Nick Polanin asked for reactions to *Better Impact*.

Confusing, reports not helpful, difficult to access
Coordinators are offering lots of help sessions
Not the same in all counties
Education hours should not count in volunteer hours. BI does not distinguish.
Too steep a learning curve for less-computer-literate folks
Why are people not using BI? Can't cope with computer? Not interested in continuing as MG.

Are county programs listed as "approved for 1 MG CEU" good across the state? The consensus was yes.

COUNTY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

Atlantic – no report.

Bergen- no report

Burlington – no report

Cumberland - no report

Essex - no report.

Hunterdon--

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension in Hunterdon County celebrated our 95th anniversary in business. Our new class this coming year will begin early Oct and be a hybrid . Hunterdon County 4 H fair was well attended and our MG tables was busy answering various questions. Hunterdon MG worked the annual tomato tasting at Snyder Farm, this was also well attended. Our Scientist Citizens team as been active and many of our teams are continue to met in smaller small groups and beginning to engage the general public at various events.

Mercer – no report

Middlesex -- The Native Plant Garden Team is taking orders for their popular online fall plant sale. Fall is a great time to plant native plants for the pollinators. For more information and to order plants go to <https://go.rutgers.edu/nativeplantsale> .

The new Master Gardener Intern class begins on 9/8 (evening) and 9/9 (morning). Classes will run through the Spring and continue into the Summer in the "Outdoor Classroom". This is a vegetable garden maintained by the class. Good luck to our next class of volunteers and gardeners in training.

On August 20th the Middlesex County Master Gardeners hosted their annual Open House. The event was an opportunity to share the various gardens at the Earth Center with the public and raise awareness about the resources available to the community. Music, art, lectures and tours of the Earth Center rounded out the day.

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The Butterfly House has closed for the season. Butterflies will be released later this month when the netting is removed. Work now begins to pack and plan for next year. All other gardens are still up and running through October including the ever popular Children's Garden.

The Earth Center hosted more than 250 kids and adults this summer for tours and educational programs.

The Rows for the Hungry has harvested close to 9,000 pounds of fresh, first quality produce this season and is still going strong! The team will be hosting Rutgers Health Care Administrators Graduate Alumni Group for a day of service on September 16 and Replenish - Middlesex County's Emergency Food Network on October 1st. for a Volunteer Day. The Rows for the Hungry offers days of service to groups interested in curbing food insecurity.

A new season of individual classes for the general public begins in September including our popular Growing Garlic class.

Monmouth -- Throughout the month of August Monmouth's gardens have looked and produced well! Our PAR garden is up to donating almost a ton of produce! The interns have been out making sure their veggies are watered and tended and the proof is in the poundage! The food banks have been overjoyed with each and every delivery. Thank you, Interns! The JMG garden has been no slacker either coming in with over 1,000 lbs. grown by our Junior Master Gardeners. More than half of our students participated in the County Fair with produce submissions winning ribbons for their efforts.

Our other gardens: Herb, Monarch Waystation, Rain, Native and front beds have been in maintenance mode with scheduled watering and weeding. The plan for September is to add plants that need replacing that were lost during the pandemic, move "volunteers", prune what needs it then and set up for the winter months. All seems to be under control and looking pretty darn good!

Our Hort. Enrichment Committee has finished up one cycle and is preparing for the last of the year. A trip to Longwood Gardens set up by the Trips and Tours Committee is planned for October 13th and all are excited to go. In September we will have Ellen Karcher speaking at our General Meeting on Lavender which we are very much looking forward to. This month, Master Gardener, Blair Bethea, gave us a talk on Drip Irrigation Systems that will be very helpful to many of us.

To recognize all of MGs and the hard work that has been done in the gardens, JMG Program and our plant sale, we had our annual Recognition Picnic. Here Debbie LaGattuta and Laura Dreifus were recognized for their outstanding service during and after the pandemic with their Speakers Bureau Programs. These programs were virtual for general meetings and private garden clubs and included our Coffee Talks in February 2021 and 2022. Laura attends all virtual programs and also assists our coordinator in the virtual Helpline programs done through our county libraries. Both ladies continue to put forth organized programs of interest and packed with relevant information. They helped to keep our Master Gardeners in the public eyes and minds. Thank you, Ladies!

Morris - no report

Ocean -- Many hundreds of people attended the RCE Butterfly Tent event in August that was staffed by MGs.

Fall Garden Day is an outdoor event, open to the public, led by our Interns. It is Friday, September 23 with a rain date. The theme is Native Plants.

Fall crops have been planted in our garden that provides food to food pantries. We had the first harvest from the new hydroponics garden.

There are Community Outreach events scheduled for September and October.

The Speakers Bureau is holding a meeting to attract new members or those who can update our PowerPoints. Talks are being scheduled for next year already.

Twenty people have already paid for the 2023 MG class that starts in January.

Tick lab and Helpline are closing at the end of October.

Passaic – no report

Somerset – no report

Sussex - no report

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Union – no report.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 10:17 am. The next meeting is 11/10/22 at 9 am by Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted
Cindy Hedin, Recording Secretary