

**Minutes of the October Regularly Scheduled Meeting of  
The Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc.  
October 16, 2004  
Chesapeake**

**Attendance**

(Chesapeake) Pinky Derieux, Carol Dixon, Charles Lastinger, Pauline Price; (Fairfax) George Graine; (Fauquier) Jim Scibek; (Goochland/Powhatan) Chuck Miller; (Halifax) Bill McCaleb; (Hanover) Christy Brennon, Cheri Haggerty; (James City County/Williamsburg) Ann DeForest; (New River Valley) Bill Gottert; (Norfolk) Tom Bolt, Donald Snipes; (Northern Neck) Jinny Estell, Pat Rogers; (Prince George) Cheryl Sebera; (Prince William) Pat Reilly; (Roanoke) Kathryn Debnar; (Rockbridge) Ted Jenks; (Virginia Beach) Liz Maurer, Fran Shelton; Betty Villers; (Virginia Tech) Dave Close; (York) Jackie Lohr

**Call to Order**

President Bill McCaleb called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Introductions**

President McCaleb welcomed all to the October board meeting and thanked Chesapeake group for ordering such good weather with 70 degrees. He asked Pinky Derieux to tell us what the MGs in Chesapeake have been doing. She reported they have been busy with committee meetings and getting ready for the next orientation class and anxiously looking for an Extension Agent. Thanks to everyone for coming such a long distance. Introductions followed around the room with names and units represented.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Pat Reilly reported:

**Overall Balance of Accounts**

Checking Account Balance	\$5,159.82
Money Market (including PDR EEF of \$4214.91)	\$7,629.67
CD Balance	\$6,396.51
Total Overall Balance of Accounts	<u>\$19,186.00</u>

**Checking Account**

Balance as of 8/14/2004	\$3,161.92
Income	\$4,236.00
	(Includes dep of \$2,000 from MM)
Expenses	-\$2,238.10
Balance as of 10/16/2004	<u>\$5,159.82</u>

## Year to Date Income & Expenses to Budget

### Income YTD

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Membership	\$5,000.00	\$1,907.00	\$3,093.00
Education	\$0.00	\$216.57	\$0.00
	\$5,000.00	\$2,123.57	\$2,876.43

### Expenses YTD

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Comm/Unit Support	\$450.00	-\$163.00	\$287.00
Membership	\$1,500.00	-\$155.13	\$1,344.87
Newsletter	\$1,875.00	-\$1,180.09	\$694.91
State Fair	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
Gifts	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$600.00
Marketing	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Nom & Elections	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
President (SCC)	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
V Pres	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$25.00
Sec	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
Treas (banking)	\$175.00	-\$62.30	\$112.70
	\$5,000.00	-\$1,560.52	\$3,439.48

From now on the Money Market account will include the Business Savings Account which was not making very much money, less than the Money Market. The amount in the Education Endowment Fund will always be shown as a part of the Money Market Account. Because we were being charged a bank fee, \$2,000 was moved from the Money Market Account to the Checking Account in order to maintain a daily collected balance high enough not to incur the fee.

Dues renewed for two years and life memberships will go into a restricted account not to be used in budget year of 2005. It will be used in the year 2006 or 2007. Monies for Life memberships will be allocated at \$12 a year for eight years. Money from dues we raise this year will be for 2006. Remember, the budget is a guide line. Pat asked for questions and if this was usable, she will continue to do it this way. Masters Gardeners can now become members of the state association, renew memberships and make donations to the education endowment fund online. It is all through PayPal. Report was accepted.

## Minutes

The August minutes were accepted.

## President's Report

President, Bill McCaleb reports there has been a lot of action on the internet between committees and Dave Close on the ListServ. At the end of this month, October 30th, the Finance Committee will be meeting. Just had meeting with MG College Advisory Committee in Charlottesville September 24th. Cheri Haggerty attended in Bill's place.

There has been lots of information flowing back and forth and discussion on the Endowment Committee for the state MG coordinator position. The committee was set up originally by the past president, Jim Scibek. The

committee members are Angela Cingale, Dave Close, Kathryn Debnar, Carol Dixon, Jane Platt, Pat Reilly, and Jim Scibek. Since Jim appointed the original committee, President McCaleb asked each of the committee members to continue to serve and asked Board's approval to include Jim Scibek and Dave Close on the committee. It was approved and Pat Reilly was approved to serve as chairman.

## **Vice President**

Cheri Haggerty as Vice President has been given the task of getting better representation at board meetings and make every unit aware of VMGA.. Cheri's goal is to go through the MG Coordinators as listed on the website and ask them for recommendations for someone to be a rep so we can see what is going on all over the state. At the State Fair and Harvest Jubilee while talking to MGs, she found people who had never heard of the VMGA. Her goal is to make every unit aware of the VMGA and what we can go for them and what they can do for us. Bill McCaleb's group is helping the Appomattox group by teaching some of their intern training classes.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Education - Fran Shelton and Pinky Derieux, Co-Chairs**

On September 18, 2004, a program was presented at the State Arboretum (Blandy), with approximately 62 MGs signing up for the program but 7 MGs did not attend.

Due to Hurricane Ivan's presence, the Winchester area experienced rain, winds, thunderstorms and tornadoes on Friday and continued into Saturday. Based on the weather predictions. Mary Oline, Assistant Curator of Education at Blandy had planned an alternative program for VMGA. Saturday morning, the area was still experiencing cloudy conditions and misty rains.

Due to the weather, we began the program in Blandy's library with Dave Carr speaking on "Flower Diversity" and Emily Huttar and Marsha Burd stepped in at the last minute from the Warren County MGs and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the restoration of the gardens of a historic home in their community.

Thereafter, the weather cleared, and we were able to continue the program with the walks/talks on the grounds of the Arboretum.

Even though Hurricane Ivan was in the area, the program was a success and well attended.

The Education Committee will be meeting in Leesburg, Virginia, on Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup> to fully evaluate the Blandy program and begin plans for the 2005 Spring Program. The agenda will include discussion of the registration form. At present there is no cancellation policy, no date for refunds or cancellations. There is also a problem with people thinking they are automatically members of VMGA when filling out the applications. All of the recommendations will be brought back to the board for approval at the next meeting. The goal of the education programs is not to make money but to always break even. In the future the cost for members will probably be \$12 since the cost of speakers is going up. We want to continue to have quality speakers.

We've had discussions with Barbara Geer and the Good Gardening Symposium will be held on March 12, 2005 in the Petersburg Area. The next VMGA educational program will probably be in April.

### **Newsletter - Florace Arnold, Editor**

Florace was not in attendance. The deadline for the next issue is November 1.

Electronic newsletter - Florace and Pat Reilly have talked with some people about going electronic with the newsletter. Pat reported they are looking for someone to be the E-editor, to handle this. Pauline Price (membership) would have to add a new column to the spreadsheet with a (1) for electronic or (0) for hard copy of newsletter. Florace would create her newsletter file in Publisher and send it to the E-editor(person doing the electron mailing). That person would request the spreadsheet from Pauline that would indicate whether person would receive newsletter by mail or electronically. They would create the labels for mailing. There is a two weeks lag from when Florace creates the newsletter and gets it back from the printer. It would be available to those with email before the hard copy comes out. The E-editor would post it to the website and password protect the site. They would create a mail merge from the spreadsheet to let people know the password. With password, VMGA members can access the newsletter electronically and save cost of mailing. Old newsletters

will go into archives where anyone can access them. Discussion followed. If board approves this process, Florace will ask in the newsletter for two E-editors to handle this. Registration forms for education events will be available on the website under Education. The decision to receive it electronically will be voluntary.

### **Membership - Pauline Price, Chair**

Membership is growing but we have 201 who have dropped. The failure to renew is increasing.

Discussion followed on doing away with the membership card. The new membership roster lists when memberships expire. Expiration date will also be on the membership labels in the future. The sleeve for the card cost twenty cents for each card. Motion made and carried we do away with the membership card . Every member who joins will receive a letter explaining the process. Pauline reported 465 members of which 113 are lifetime members. Thanks to the education committee for sixteen new and eight renewing memberships received as a result of Blandy. List of people not renewing that was available at the last meeting brought results when reminded by their unit reps. Tom Bolt (Norfolk) will assist Pauline with contacting reps of those non renewing VMGA members. Rosters will be mailed at 60 cents each.

### **Communication/Unit Support - Frank Reilly, Chair**

#### **Unit Support**

Consists of Pinky Derieux, Kerry Goldmeyer and Frank Reilly and whomever else we need. Since the last meeting the Unit Support committee has had no activities to report

#### **Communication Committee**

Members: Cheri Haggerty, Shelby Snyder, Kathryn Debnar, and Chair Frank Reilly and whomever else we need.

- 1.) Since the August Regularly Scheduled Meeting there have been 15897visitors to VMGA.net.
- 2.) Since the August regularly Scheduled Meeting, the web page has been updated on 39 separate occasions.
- 3.) The most popular pages in the last three months have been Hort Updates, News, Minutes, Calendar, and MGPW. The Front Page has 66% of all visitors, which means that most people (by far) come in through the front page, AND see the news and announcements that are posted there.
- 4.) We have set up an on-line membership (renewal) form. The form allows electronic renewal, and payment through PayPal. The Treasurer gets an email message with the information when the form is filled out. The Treasurer gets notification via email from PayPal when any payments have been made. The other forms of membership application/renewal are all still operational.
- 5.) Using PayPal we are accepting donations to the Diane Relf Educational Endowment as well as the Virginia Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment.

### **State Fair - Christy Brennan, Chair**

Christy thanked everyone for helping. The Virginia Entertainment Council voted the State Fair the most popular and best improved attraction for the year. The Master Gardener booth was featured on several local newscast and she heard it was on Good Morning America.

One hundred and thirty Master Gardeners from twelve different counties staffed the booth for a total of 110 hours.

MGs supported the Virginia Green Industry Council by helping plant the State Fair Gardens. This event was well attended by a group of hard workers who turned empty barrels and piles of mulch into beautiful display gardens. The break down group, at the close of the fair, carefully un-planted the display gardens and helped prepare for the plant sale.

The Plant Sale workers helped customers decide on the best plants to purchase and helped them with purchases. It was the first time we have helped as cashiers.

Distributed 300 VaTech soil kits and ran out the first day and were scrambling to find more. Next year will request a case. Had over 5,011 contacts.

The bug collection brought by George Graine and Fairfax MGs was very popular among the youngest contacts, even if some of them were frightened.

Next year they are looking to make it a more interactive booth. Another idea is have a plant ID workshop at MG College. Christy hasn't had a chance to look over the surveys as yet. Will look at the low number of contacts close to the 10:00 closing and MGs traveling distances that late at night and make some decision about hours available at booth.

## Unit Reports

The Unit reps attending presented written reports or have e-mailed them to the secretary. They will be posted at [www.VMGA.net](http://www.VMGA.net) and in the next newsletter.

## Extension Liaison - reported by Dave Close, MG Coordinator

**District Fall Conferences** - had 10-15 minutes to highlight the MG program, gave statewide statistics and district statistics; highlighted local programs of excellence within each districts. Dave asked to be speaker at all 6 conferences but only made four. Hoping to start up more interest in the MG program with agents across programming lines such as ANR, FCS, and 4-H.

**Nametags** - met with Pat Sobrero August 24 and discussed situation. She suggested he take it back to local coordinators and/or agents for a final decision on a policy for handing out nametags. By next meeting there will be a final statement on the nametag policy. Pat feels that providing nametags is very important and would like it to continue.

**PMGs** - limited number of copies will be printed, 3-hole punched and shrink wrapped. Future updates will be sent out at discretion of specialists. This is a test run, no guarantee for continuation. This was championed by Jim Riddell (strong ally to the VCE MG program). They will be provided this round at no charge. There will be some checks and balances in place otherwise they will be snatched up. Question, if they will be available to training classes. Some units make their own copies. Units with Growlines/helplines will get a copy at no charge, this may be in addition to the copy to the extension agent. Jim Riddell will be making the final decision as they edit the guide and make it more user friendly. Dave will ask about providing training to use the PMG. Dave will take the comments back about the accessibility. Will be available late winter or early spring.

**Traveling** - yesterday met with 3 units; Suffolk, VA Beach, and Hampton MGs. In the next 6-9 months trying to meet with all the units, trying to combine units for each visit. This is the third priority in his initial email on the MGC/listserv.

**MG College** - the MG Advisory Team met in Charlottesville, September 24th, to review MG College 2004. Will be making some adjustments and/or changes based on comments and suggestions. One thing they will do is extend it by one day for Leadership Development Training - formerly referred to as New Coordinator/Coordinator Training and will open it up to anyone interested in developing leadership skills within the MG framework. MG College will be June 21-26.

**Newsletter** - summer edition should be in the mail Monday at the latest. Have hired a student worker to assist and you will see the changes Dave mentioned at August meeting. Dave welcomes any comments and they have already started on the fall issue which should be going out within a few weeks. You will be getting two issues back to back but he wanted to send the summer issue which highlights all folks who met milestone awards for the year even though it's late.

**Website** - hired another student to help with the website and she has sent out an initial draft of the site for review, comments and feedback. Corrections and changes have been made and they are hoping to go live with the site to the public by Thanksgiving or maybe by November 1.

**State Record Keeping System** - continue to work with that. Have met with programmer to discuss suggestions that have come in since March. Still on track to begin work in spring 2005 on revamping system. Right now basically just doing damage control. You will be getting more information in the future. If you are having problems with generating a specific report, email Dave and he will have his assistant Jay directly query the database to create the report you want or need. Through the process of getting ready for the district fall conferences and the emails from within the board about numbers of hours, number of volunteers statewide it became clear we still have a lot of fluff in the record keeping system as far as active vs. inactive members. Dave asked that we continue to review who we have listed as active and inactive and try to clean up our numbers. These numbers are extremely important for a lot of reasons for different audiences and he would like

to give the most accurate portrayal of our organization statewide as possible. This is also a liability issue, Risk Management if we have folks who are not re-certified or maintain their certification as MGs. It protects them and us as an organization to make sure those folks are not out doing projects with certified MGs. Tech does provide liability coverage for those who are truly certified MGs who are non paid staff of cooperative extension.

President McCaleb reminded everyone that only those with 20 volunteer hours plus 8 hours education are considered active. If they are not active they should be moved from the record keeping system to inactive status. They can be brought back to active at a later date when their circumstances change. Dave said it is really an issue of risk management; we are not trying to boot people out. We need to have an accurate picture, what Virginia really is. Question about MG moving from another state, check with coordinator's manual or contact Dave directly.

**SOD** - Virginia has formed a Task Force that includes folks from Extension, VDACS, representative from APHIS, and someone from the State Department of Forestry. Met late September at Steele's Tavern to begin the strategic planning process for Virginia. They created a time line of work that they are planning to deliver. Next step is the teleconference training scheduled for October 26. Invitation has gone out to all ANR agents statewide to serve as a local host training site. The agents/local coordinators are determining who will be invited to participate in the initial round of training with the understanding that more training will be offered to MG volunteers at the appropriate time. Once the teleconferencing training occurs there is a resource manual that will be produced by the Task Force and given to each of the unit offices. The MGs and Hort Lines will likely be using this resource book to deal with questions from phone calls or emails about SOD. There were two positive sites in Virginia but all the infected plants that were positively identified have been eradicated so we are fairly confident that we don't have any new plants coming in that are infected and the ones that have already come in have been dealt with.

**Hort Agents** - there were 23 strategic hire positions within Cooperative Extension. Most, if not all have been advertised and interviews have begun. Hopefully we'll have all those folks on board by end of year, or first of next year.

**Harvest Jubilee** - would like to commend the folks in Henrico, Hanover and Chesterfield for stepping forward to participate. Folks at Tech didn't find out about it until the midnight hour and were encouraged to participate at some level. Specifically asked if MGs would be willing to participate. Dave went on email and contacted a couple of folks and they graciously accepted the challenge and their work was greatly appreciated. He's sure we will be asked again. Thanks to all those that participated.

President McCaleb had questions of Dave;

**Coordinators Manual CD** - can we make a copy, Dave said 'yes'. Dave would prefer copies stay in the hands of the leadership; he doesn't want every MG statewide to have a copy of the Coordinator Manual. Every Extension Office needs to have a copy.

**Promo CD for MG College** - asked Dave about availability of the CD sooner than spring of next year, Frank Reilly is still working on it. Let Frank know any suggestions for additions. Dave still has copies of last year's Promo CD if anyone wants one, email him if you want a copy.

**Search for Excellence Award** - which is our Brag Night Award. Pat Reilly has made several contacts and has a copy of their criteria. Instead of having a popularity contest, this is a way of setting up categories and having criteria, and then using independent judges to judge posters and projects.

## Unfinished Business

**Purchase of shirts** : Pauline Price (membership) brought up that the group needs to decide if we need a chair to handle the sale of shirts and other items. There is a program with Lands End for ordering shirts with our logo, you would order direct, and therefore don't need a chair. If we want shirts or other items as a fundraiser we would have to do it in-house. As membership chair Pauline cannot be in charge of marketing of items also. If we want to do it for profit, we need to consider setting up a system to handle all this. Motion was made and carried that we set up a **Fund Raising Committee** - The committee will be responsible for raising funds while encouraging membership and renewals. The committee members include Cheri Haggerty as Chair, Christy Brennan, Kathryn Debnar, Jackie Lohr, Pat Reilly, and Cheryl Sebera. MG members are encouraged to pass on information to the committee.

**Endowment Committee**:- Has a Chair. Pat Reilly reported that a draft of the agreement has been put together by Dave as well as a case statement and all of our comments and they are trying to reduce it. Will present the final draft to the board at our December meeting. Will have to check wording to see if it is in agreement with VMGA . Ted Jenks (Rockbridge) suggested we check the legal aspects of this agreement.

**Lifetime Membership**: Committee will make recommendations at the December meeting.

**Nametags:** Pat Sobrero has full confidence in Dave. Decision has been left up to Dave.

**PMG:** Don't know full impact on that but it will be available in every extension office.

## **New Business**

**Special License Plate :** Tom Bolt (Norfolk) proposed a license plate not for fund raising, but for marketing. He passed out copies of the procedures and proposed logo. You have three years to collect 350 applications once the tags have been designed. It will cost \$10 per set of plates each year in addition to regular registration fee. He already has almost 100 signatures from Hampton Roads MGs. Dave Close will verify if person is a MG from his data base. Renewal requires certification that you are still a MG which DMV will run it through whomever we decide to check and Dave has agreed to do that. We would go before the state legislature for approval and then start collecting the monies for the 350. His suggestion is to survey the state to see if we can get 350-400 people who say they want the tags, we have over 4000 MGs throughout the state. It was decided that we would all take information back to our units and Tom will provide Dave with information to include in his newsletter which goes to all MGs.

**Minimum Standard for final intern exam :** Jenny Estell (Northern Neck) brought up we need a basic knowledge base that all should agree on. Pat Reilly reported that the Coordinators conference in Denver last summer agreed to work towards a core curriculum and core test for all MGs across the nation. We will see more on the listserv from Dave about this. Dave is the point of contact for the state of Virginia.

**Goody Bags for MG College:** Roanoke has agreed to do the bags again next year. If anyone sees anything they can contribute please contact Roanoke MGs.

## **Announcements**

Next meeting December 11, 2004 in Kilmarnock (Northern Neck).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Villers  
Secretary  
VMGA