

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc.
Bi-Monthly Board Meeting
August 9, 2008
Prince William (Draft)

Attendance:

(Amherst, Campbell, Lynchburg) Deb Straw; Karen Sacasky; (Arlington/Alexandria) Joe Kelly; (Bedford) Ann and Shim Zudekoff; (Chesapeake) Pinky Derieux; (Chesterfield) Lynne Foote; (Fairfax) George Graine; (Fauquier) Jim Scibek; (Gloucester) Bonnie Bernard; (Green Spring) Joan Richards; (Hanover) Christy Brennan, Cheri Haggerty; (James City County/Williamsburg) Jim and Nelda Pressly, Susan Giandomenico; (Louisa) Tina Chalekie; (Prince George) Cheryl Sebera; (Prince William) Janet and Bill Scott, Pat and Frank Reilly, Leslie Paulsen; (Newport News) Peggy Fox, Anita Smith; (Northern Neck) Edward Munns, Julie Denny; (Rockbridge) Ted Jenks, David Minns; (Virginia Beach) Jim and Mary Ann Kincaid, Fran Shelton, Betty Villers; (VT/VCE) Dave Close.

Call to Order –

President Betty Villers called the meeting to order at 10:00am

Introductions

Janet Scott the VMGA Rep from Prince William welcomed everyone and explained that most of the Prince William MGs were volunteering at a large program in the teaching garden and were participating in the Prince William County Fair today. She introduced Leslie Paulsen, President of the Prince William Master Gardeners. The Prince William MGs' are a very active group of 150 members volunteering in several programs with the area farmers markets including plant a row, the teaching garden and several school programs. The Great Scapes Program is very popular and advises homeowners on starting and maintaining lawn programs.

The board introduced themselves as well as each attendee.

Minutes – Christy Brennan

The June 2008 minutes were accepted as submitted and posted on the VMGA web site.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Scott

Bill presented the treasurer's report and discussed the new format which shows the balance, a new fund-raising inventory section, expenses, assets, lifetime memberships, CD activity, and liabilities. The monies collected from the Silent Auction at MG College went directly to the Endowment and did not show in the Treasurer's report. The treasurer's report will be filed for audit. (The report is attached).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education - Fran Shelton, Pinky Derieux, Co-Chairs

Fran reminded everyone of the fall program at Mount Vernon on Friday 9/19/08. There will be a lecture and tour of the grounds consisting of approximately 3 hours of continuing education hours if approved by your agent or coordinator. Currently there are only two persons signed up for the event. Reservation forms are available for Reps to take back to the units. We will need at least 28 people confirmed to attend. MG Volunteers with passes have been waved the registration fee. The fee is \$20.00 for VMGA Members and \$30.00 for non members. The committee is somewhat discouraged that the time and effort to plan such a program does not correspond to the interest or attendance.

Newsletter – Cheri Haggerty

Cheri announced that Peggy Fox (Newport News) has agreed to become the newsletter content editor; she will work with the newsletter committee consisting of Dawn Loudon, Tom Bolt, and Cheri Haggerty.

Membership – Mary Ann Kincaid, Chair

As of August 8, there are 513 members of the Virginia Master Gardener Association. Of these, 344 are Active members; 8 are Auxiliary members; and 161 are Lifetime members. 130 members have not renewed, Mary Ann has a list of the members which have not re-newed for each rep. to take back to their unit.

Communication/Unit Support - Frank Reilly, Chair

Unit Support

Members: Pat Reilly, Karen Sacasky, Kerry Goldmeyer, Pinky Derieux, Cheri Haggerty and Frank Reilly and whoever else we need.

1. We were approached for information concerning activities in a local unit after the loss of their agent and coordinator.
2. A new Unit Officer asked us about 501c (3) status, application procedure, and reason to apply.

Communication Committee

Members: Cheri Haggerty, Kathryn Debnar, Shelby Snyder, Betty Truax, Tom Bolt, Paul Campbell, George Alapas, Bob Schmidt, and Chair Frank Reilly and whomever else we can get.

1. Since the June regularly scheduled meeting there have been 1561 visitors to VMGA.net. However, they visited 11748 pages or about 7.5 pages per visit to our site.
2. We had 17 visitors from Hungary, 4 from the Philippines, 2 each from Israel, France and Vietnam, and at least one person is not helping to get ready for the Olympics in China because they visited us as well. Twenty of our visitors stayed for more than an hour!
3. Nearly all of our visitors visit the front page during their stay. On average for every 100 who enter the site through only 35 leave. The rest visit someplace else on the site. This makes it a very productive place to make announcements, and is why most new stuff gets mentioned there.
4. The most popular pages in the last three months have been the front page, Useful Links, Calendar, officers, membership, and resources. This is the first report I have made where the Hort Updates have fallen from the top 10, and it might be because we haven't updated them in about 5 years! We could use an earnest sole to take that on as a project...
5. We need pictures from MG College so that we can begin to produce the MG College recruiting page for next year in time for a December posting.

Finance Committee – Ted Jenks, Chair

The Budget for 2008 was submitted and approved at Master Gardener College. The VA Tech Foundation suggested that VMGA and Individual units set up accounts with VA Tech. Units have until June, 2009 to waive the 7% initial fee. Ted recommends that we research if this is beneficial to the organization or not. Questions about fees, transaction limits and the turnaround time for transactions were raised. Ted asked that members submit concerns to his committee and he will research and bring the information back to the group.

Special Committees

Coordinator Endowment- Kathryn Debnar, Chair

Kathryn was not present. Leslie Paulsen reported \$4,300 was collected from the Silent Auction. She requested a receipt from the Endowment /Dawn Lerch to complete our records. We will need to have a financial break out of funds listing separately monies from the Silent Auction contribution and the sale of wine glasses and books.

VGIC –Cheri Haggerty

This year is the VMGA trial year of Membership in the Va Green Industry Council, they invited us to

join due to our reputation and volunteerism. VGIC donates all of the plant material to the State Fair and sponsors the Fair Plant Sale.

The next event will be held in Richmond Sept 20th in the Science and Children's Museum Parking lot- a good central location. VMGA will participate by having an educational booth. Lots of public education and well known speakers will be at this event. Cheri will be sending out information for volunteers to participate.

Search for Excellence- Christy Brennan, Chair

Members: Angela Cingale and Bud Foster

"**Brag Boards**" - a tool for units to brag on their most successful projects." Every unit is encouraged to participate at MG College. The **Sustainable Landscape Management** Categories for awards are; Environmental Stewardship, Working with Youths, Value of the Landscape, Food & Nutrition, Overall Quality of Life. It was suggested that the project be chosen well in advance of June to start putting the information together early. Displays can also be used at local and state fairs and should contain all the information to include the SLM criteria.

The committee would like to submit its first proposal to add to the definition stated above.

Purpose of Brag Boards is to showcase the types of public education performed by a unit, a tool for units to share the success and stories of their projects. The committee has proposed several changes in the competition. These include: a focus on one project, completion of a standard form and to tailor the exhibit as a mini handbook which can be used a model and training tool for other units to start similar projects. The committee encourages units to share in projects that were unsuccessful to help educate other units on the challenges with certain projects.

Units will be allowed to submit Brag Boards at MG College. Awards will be given to those units completing the requirements

If the units follow the proposed guidelines and complete the new form, the project could be submitted to the national and international competition with few changes

The committee recommendations were read out aloud, sparking a lively discussion. It was suggested that the committee's recommendations be posted as a draft and open for review until the next meeting. (The draft will be sent to all the unit reps).

It was recommended that the final draft be made available to units, on the web and in the newsletter for a timely notification prior to MG College.

P. Diane Relf Scholarship Endowment – George Graine, Chair

The committee submitted many applications to coordinators and spent a great deal of time informing all members and units of the process and availability of scholarships for Master Gardener College. The results were disappointing and were not representative of the time and effort of the committee, only 18 applications were submitted – one was submitted improperly and one was non-eligible. Out of the 16 applications, 9 were VMGA members. This was less than 25% of the units participating in this benefit. Based on the lack of response George recommended that we decide if the scholarship fund is worth the time and effort to continue. He is not considering continuing to be the chair of the committee for next year, as this year's committee has performed the requirements. A discussion included the reading of a thank you note from one of this year's recipients saying that she would not have gone to MG College without the help of the award.

Ted Jenks mentioned it would be nice to determine what % of units which attended MG College had a scholarship winner would better represent the benefits used. The motion was made by Ted Jenks to Thank George for completing an extremely hard job and we appreciated all of his hard work, we accept his resignation but will not follow the committee's recommendation to dissolve the scholarships but will continue with the scholarships in 2009 and evaluate the program after next year. Bonnie Bernard seconded the motion and motion passed.

State Fair- Christy Brennan

Christy has coordinated the schedule for the VA State Fair with the various units there are several times still available for units to volunteer. There are lots of educational handouts for children and adults there will also be a demonstration on pruning crape myrtles, pruning in general, composting, vermiculture, good and bad bugs, and land stewardship and performing an experiment with Strawberries and DNA!

Fund Raising – Betty Villers, Chair – Susan Giandomenico

Betty announced that Susan Giandomenico has volunteered to become the new chair of this committee. Susan had some supplies of the T-shirts, license plate frames, decals and the new water bottle carriers for sale. She has several ideas and is eager to begin and to solicit new fund raising ideas.

Extension Liaison Report- Dave Close, MG Coordinator

- ❖ Master Gardener College was a success with record attendance of 250. The Advisory team will start meeting soon to finalize speakers and plan for 2009.
- ❖ The 2008 Silent Auction went very well and everyone is pleased.
- ❖ Handbook revisions are due out late October for spring 2009 training.
- ❖ The National Coordinators Conference will be in Northern VA, spring of 2009. This conference draws a good crowd, in previous years 38 out of 50 states had representation. The plan is to “march on the hill” and meet with State representatives one on one. This is a conference for paid coordinators only. Northern district MG's have been asked to help with the conference.
- ❖ The administration is working on the request for unit e-mail addresses for each help desk; the problem is a single address with multiple users and potential security risks. There may be a way to do this with the help of the VA Tech IT department.
- ❖ With Dr. Novak leaving the director position earlier this month, Dr. Roger Harris has been appointed as the interim director. Dr Harris will serve as the interim director for at least one year
- ❖ Northern VA agents are participating in a survey to determine the training needs of the public and extension and are developing a base level of information for clients. This will include a bullet point checklist of Best Management Practices to use as a tool in public education.
- ❖ Forty letters of interest were sent to corporations by the Endowment team. One company responded favorably and will be meeting with the Endowment team later this month. The company is very interested in developing a long term relationship and could prove to be very valuable when attracting other corporate sponsors.
- ❖ The Emerald Ash Borer is officially here in VA. The US Forest Service is developing a National Program to engage Master Gardeners as front line detectors. They are currently developing a protocol and pilot project. The Emerald Ash Borer has been identified in several small pockets throughout the US – due in part to commerce – we are moving this pest through fire wood and pallet distribution.
- ❖ August 27th is the dedication ceremony of the Josline Novak Garden at Va Tech.

Unit Reports

The Unit reps attending were asked to send their reports to the secretary. They will be posted at www.VMGA.net and printed in the next newsletter.

President's question of the day concerned the unit newsletters, whether the unit had one or not, if available electronically, and if the VMGA could have access to it to copy articles for the VMGA newsletter.

Unfinished Business

VMGA Executive Board meeting with the two Deans at MG College -

Cheri Haggerty reported on the meeting on Thursday June 19th with Dr. Sharon Quisenberry, Dean of The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Dr Mark McCann, Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension. These notes are derived from that meeting.

Dean Quisenberry and Dr McCann

- No additional standardization (such as “Help Desk” is currently planned- the only standardization was to the help desk and reporting forms to capture information and access need in local areas.

- It is OK for the MG help desk at each unit to have an Email address in the VT system. Discussed in Coordinators report
- There is strong interest in the expansion of MG programs to elder care and youth programs, especially “at risk” youth.
- There is strong interest in water conservation programs
- Lawn “nutrient management” programs to improve water quality are important.
 1. Halifax Unit noted that they had gone to all stores that sell fertilizers and placed soil test kits and extension handouts.
- Encouraged support for Local Food programs and Community Gardens and support in providing a conduit from farmers to Food Banks.
- All local MG units with money accounts, either of their own or as part of the local extension office, are expected to conduct an annual audit or review of records and provide the summary results to their local extension agent.
 1. It was also noted that the VA Tech Foundation can set up accounts for local units that pay interest of about 4% per year. Until June 2009 they will wave the initial fee which is normally 7%. If there is interest in finding out more about these accounts the point of contact is Dawn Lerch (540) 231-5546.
- VCE & CALS is increasing commercial interactions but are trying to balance this with Master Gardeners and homeowners.
- Web based activities are not viewed as a “final” answer but primarily as an additional resource.

Endowment –Dean Quisenberry stressed that one of the most valuable contributions a Master Gardener can make to the Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment is provide the names and contact information for potential large individual, foundation or corporate donors. Dean Quisenberry and the VT Foundation will make the contact and request for donation. It is especially helpful however if the Master Gardener knows a specific person in foundations or companies and can help with introductions.

Budget Issues – With only 95% of needed budget: this is causing some districts to “hold” open positions; causing changes in how postage is managed i.e.-separate line item; asking for more % of local money to support agent positions but doing this only on a case by case basis.

Concerning financial records of each unit, Dave strongly recommend that each unit have an annual review of all records and submit the federal form to the IRS for non-profits annually. Extension agents should be allowed to look over the financial reports because ultimately it is under their responsibility.

MG College Silent Auction -

Prince William has agreed to take on the Silent Auction for next year, but they are looking for a new unit to volunteer to work with them for 2009, so the transition can go smoothly for 2010.

MG College Goodie Bags -

We are looking for a volunteer or a unit to take over the MG College Goody Bags (300) for next year.

New Business

Meeting of the current and previous VMGA officers July 26th - Betty Villers reported This meeting was to discuss the direction for VMGA for the next two years.

- ❖ We recommended slight changes to the Membership form which changed the order of some items and included all the categories of membership
- ❖ We began researching how VMGA can meet the educational needs of our members and the individual units – the results of this discussion will be the focus of the meeting in October.
- ❖ Frank Reilly has done an excellent job with the web site and we have several volunteers that will be able to help him with the upkeep of the site.
- ❖ The newsletter will begin to include news from units all over the state. Several of our units have won awards which should be shared in this format. We began this task by asking for information from each unit on their newsletters. We are also exploring the possibility of linking

our newsletter with the Coordinators In- Season Report to reach to all Master Gardeners one or two times a year.

- ❖ We would like the Unit Support Committee to become more proactive to current events – such as advising units on propagating branded plants and the legalities of patent infringement during plant sales. Cheri Haggerty, a member of the Va Green Industry Council reports that this has become a hot topic and they seriously recommend not propagating patented plants.
- ❖ We will be getting with the Advisory committee to better define responsibilities of VMGA during Master Gardener College.
- ❖ The executive board will meet with the Deans of Agriculture and Extension more than once per year – a tentative meeting will be scheduled in Jan in Charlottesville.

The Fund Raising Committee - Susan G. made a motion to lower the price of the VMGA decal and flags to \$1.00 per decal and \$5.00 per flag. The motion was seconded by Cheri Haggerty and passed.

VMGA meetings for the next two years -

There are still several opportunities for units to volunteer to host the bi-monthly meetings for the next two years, please let Betty know if your unit is interested. Check the VMGA website and "Upcoming meetings: schedule" for what a local unit should know about hosting a meeting.

Announcements

Next VMGA meeting will be held on October 13, 2008 – 10:00 am in Heathsville (Northern Neck)

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christy Brennan, VMGA Secretary

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report
August 11, 2007

Balance Sheet

Data As OF: 7/31/2007

Assets

Checking Account Balance	\$12,410.88
PDR Education Endowment CD Balance	\$8,156.43
Reserve CD Balance	\$7,035.92
Future Dues CD Balance	\$4,290.14
Fundraising Inventory	\$1,326.20
Total Assets	\$33,219.57

Liabilities

Unearned Income - Future Dues	\$5,070.14
Coordinator Endowment Funds Payable	\$831.11
Coordinator Endowment Planned Gifts Payable	\$4,987.82
Unearned Income - Education Programs	\$219.00
Total Liabilities	\$11,108.07

Net Assets

Accumulated Earnings	\$18,503.54
Current Year Earnings	\$3,607.96
Total Net Assets	\$22,111.50
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$33,219.57

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report

August 11, 2007

Checking Balance as of	5/31/2007		\$8,420.35
	Receipts		\$6,096.02
		Coord Endowment Gifts	\$236.00
		Dues FY 09-18	\$564.00
		FY 08 dues (current FY)	\$1,152.00
		Education	\$219.00
		Fundraising	\$3,912.02
		Gift for EEF	\$13.00
	Disbursements		-\$1,153.69
		Comm/Support	\$0.00
		Coord Endowment Cmte	\$0.00
		Coord Endow Gift Transfers	\$0.00
		Education	\$0.00
		EEF Scholarships	-\$800.00
		Elections	\$0.00
		Fund Raising Cmte	\$9.00
		Fund Raising Gifts to Endowment	\$0.00
		Marketing	\$0.00
		Membership & Roster	-\$132.65
		Newsletter	-\$216.09
		State Fair	\$0.00
		Officers Expense	
		President	\$0.00
		Vice President	\$0.00
		Secretary	\$0.00
		Treasurer	-\$13.95
	Transfers		-\$951.80
		EEF Gift Transfers	\$0.00
		Lifetime Dues Transfers	\$0.00
		Reserve CD Transfers	\$0.00
		Fundraising Inventory Transfer	-\$951.80
Checking Balance as of	7/31/2007		\$12,410.88
		Interest Income on Reserve and EEF CD's	\$129.65
		Interest Income on Future Dues CD	\$34.10

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report
August 11, 2007

Year to Date Income & Expenses to Budget FY 08

Income YTD

Committee	Budget	Income
Membership		
FY 08 (Lifetime/Prior Year)	\$3,300.00	\$3,276.00
FY 08 (Current FY)	\$1,900.00	\$1,152.00
Subtotal	\$5,200.00	\$4,428.00
Gift for EEF		\$13.00
Interest Income		\$129.65
Gifts for EEF Scholarships	\$200.00	\$0.00
Education	\$3,000.00	
Fundraising	\$3,000.00	\$3,912.02
total	\$11,400.00	\$8,482.67

Expenses YTD

Committee	Budget	Expense	Year-End
Comm/Support	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Coord Endowment Cmte	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Education	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
EEF Scholarships	\$800.00	-\$600.00	\$200.00
Elections	\$475.00	\$0.00	\$475.00
Fund Raising Cmte	\$50.00	\$9.00	\$59.00
Fund Raising Gifts to Endow	\$3,000.00	-\$3,921.02	-\$921.02
Marketing	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Membership & Roster	\$2,000.00	-\$132.65	\$1,867.35
Newsletter	\$1,700.00	-\$216.09	\$1,483.91
State Fair	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Officers Expense			
President	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$125.00
Vice President	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$25.00
Secretary	\$35.00	\$0.00	\$35.00
Treasurer	\$35.00	-\$13.95	\$21.05
total	\$12,145.00	-\$4,874.71	

Year to Date Endowment & Restricted Funds Transactions FY08

Fund	Balance to Start	Funds Received	Transfers	Balance
Coordinator Endowment	\$595.11	\$236.00	\$0.00	\$831.11
Lifetime Dues FY 09-18	\$216.00	\$564.00	\$0.00	\$780.00
Education Endowment	\$90.00	\$13.00	\$0.00	\$103.00
Planned Gifts to Coord Endow	\$1,066.80	\$3,921.02	\$0.00	\$4,987.82
Reserve Funds CD's			\$0.00	
total				\$6,701.93