

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc.
Bi- Monthly Meeting
Oct 11th 2008
Heathsville, Northern Neck

Attendance:

(Amherst, Campbell, Lynchburg, Hill City) Deb Straw; (Arlington/Alexandria) Joe Kelly; (Chesapeake) Pinky Derieux; (Chesterfield) Lynne Foote; (Fairfax) George Graine; (Gloucester) Florace Arnold, Jim Newton; (Green Spring) Cyndi Bishop; (Hanover) Christy Brennan, Cheri Haggerty; (James City County/Williamsburg) Jim and Nelda Pressly; (Louisa) Tina Chalekie; (Prince William) Janet and Bill Scott, Frank Reilly; (Newport News) Peggy Fox; (Northern Neck) Edward Munns, Jackie Ferriter, Pat Brownell, Sue Lindsey, Julie Denny, Sharon Stuber, W Allain; (Northumberland NN) Jinny Estell, Matt Lewis, (Rockbridge) David Minns; (Virginia Beach) Jim and Mary Ann Kincaid, Fran Shelton, Betty Villers, Paul Campbell; (VT/VCE) Dave Close; (York) Jackie Lohr.

Call to Order –

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

Introductions:

Ted Munns welcomed everyone to the Northern Neck comprised five counties and the Rappanock River.

A short tour of the historic tavern was offered after the meeting and all attendees were invited to Reedville to tour the teaching garden only a short drive away.

Ted wanted to express thanks to Pat Rodgers and the Northern Neck Master Gardeners who worked hard to host the meeting. He introduced Matt Lewis, the Extension Agent. Matt is from the area and has been with Extension for 8 years. He expressed thanks to a dedicated group of Master Gardeners who help to educate property owners how to manage the 500 miles of shoreline in the area emphasizing maintaining environmental quality of the shorelines.

Introduction – All attendees were recognized by name and the unit they represented.

Minutes:

The minutes of the August Bi-monthly meeting were approved as posted on line, with the expectation of the Date change from Oct 13th to Oct 11th for the next meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Scott

Bill presented copies of the treasurers report, there have been no significant expenses incurred. The treasurer's report was accepted as read and will be filed for audit.

The report is attached at the end of this document

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Education - Fran Shelton (VA Beach), Pinky Derieux (Chesapeake), Co-Chairs,

Members: George Graine (Fairfax), Katherine Debnar (Roanoke), Debbie Hamilton (Prince William), Lenore Plissner

Fran reported that the educational program at Mount Vernon was cancelled due to lack of confirmed participants and interest. Most of the members of this committee have served for a 7 to 8 year period and feel that the committee has accomplished the goals set by the VMGA board. Units are providing continuing education for their members and the interest in VMGA educational activities has dwindled. The entire committee has decided to resign, an e-mail was sent to the VMGA Board prior to the meeting.

Betty thanked the board for all of their hard work and effort.

The Presidents question for today's meeting will discuss how each unit fulfils the continuing educational needs for Master Gardeners in the area and hopefully help to determine a new direction for the VMGA education committee.

Newsletter- Peggy Fox- Content Editor

The newsletter was distributed and will be evolving as the new members and editors obtain more experience. Peggy Fox would like the unit reps to report certain information in their reports such as:

- - What district your unit operates.
- - What new projects or programs has your unit begun since the last reporting time period?
- - What ongoing projects or programs are your units involved?
- - Titles of programs conducted since last reporting period, please include a brief description
- - # of clients who participated or were assisted

- Current total # of active volunteers, how many volunteer service hours has your unit logged?
Please send unit reports to Christy Brennan by Oct 24th.

Membership – Mary Ann Kincaid, Chair

As of October 9, there are 519 current members of the Virginia Master Gardener Association. Of these, 351 are Active members; 8 are Auxiliary members; and 160 are Lifetime members. This is an increase of 6 members since August and is 32 members more than August of last year. She has the new membership directories to distribute to unit reps. The by-laws have been published in the back of the directories. By distributing the newsletters to the reps for delivery the VMGA is able to save on postage.

Communication/Unit Support - Frank Reilly, Chair

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

Handled two units' questions regarding 501(c)3 status, filing for it, sales tax, and non-profit status.

Began a project to track Unit impact throughout the state – We need some additional help to bring this to fruition.

The committee is planning a meeting in Central Va. Area (Henrico) concerning strategies for a unit's survival after budget cuts – the idea is to have a meeting to prepare units for survival tips during the budget cuts. Issues would include: how to exist without an agent, where to find help with issues, tips to keep up motivation in the units during hard times and educational concerns.

Frank reminded everyone that a unit web site can be hosted by VMGA.net

Communication Committee - Frank Reilly, Chair

Members: Cheri Haggerty, Kathryn Debnar, Shelby Snyder, Betty Truax, Tom Bolt, Paul Campbell, George Alapas, George Graine, Bob Schmidt

There have been 8,393 visitors to VMGA.net. The most popular pages are: Calendar page, Minutes, and Member Resources and useful links.

Nearly all of our visitors visit the front page during their stay. This makes it a very productive place to make announcements and advertise upcoming events. The committee has listed Talking points to help Master Gardeners with budget woes and ways to help.

Betty reminded unit reps to send Katherine Debnar a copy of up-coming events to up-date the calendar page on VMGA.net

Finance Committee – Ted Jenks, Chair

Members: Jim Kincaid (Virginia Beach), Nancy Golden (Goochland Powhatan), Brenda Shimchek (Hanover)

Ted was not present at the meeting. The committee had nothing to report at this time.

Special Committees:

Endowment Committee : Katherine Debnar, Chair

Katherine was not present at the meeting, but will have a report at the December meeting. Dave will include the progress of the endowment in his report.

VA Green Industry Council: Cheri Haggerty, Chair

First Garden festival was held at the Science Museum in Richmond, the VMGA booth reported 100 contacts during the event... There was a consensus among the VGIC that there was not enough publicity for the event. The location was very good and there were plenty of good speakers.

The CVNL short course will be held at Lewis Ginter Feb 4th - 6th. This is the 40th anniversary of this event. The Title for this year, "Gardening in the Era of Climatic Change", this three day event will cost slightly more than previous events and will include very good group of speakers. In the advertisement of who should attend, Green Industry members, Master Gardeners and the sophisticated gardeners are mentioned. More information will be on the Lewis Ginter web site.

Fund Raising: Susan Giandomenico. - Chair

Susan was not present at the meeting and there was no report.

Search for Excellence: Christy Brennan, Angela Cingale and Bud Gregory

After a lively discussion from the August meeting, Christy was asked to send a copy of the draft of the the recommendations to the unit reps for comment.

Two responses were received: "Looks to me that someone(s) spent a lot of time coming up with these ground rules. Looks fine to me next year more Units enter the competition...even bring a board under the "old non-format." We always can learn something when we share information."

“Just don't forget the very reason we started the brag board displays; to highlight and show-off local programming that met the SLM criteria. The trophies grew from knick-knack dime store trinkets into added on amenities that you have seen each year. In the beginning it was always a fun filled project at the unit, not a full blown Olympic competition. The decision is, do we need to keep the fun in this annual project or do we need to go for the gusto of winning national awards more than having fun. “

Betty reminded members that the purpose of the update is to have our winners ready for the National Master Gardener Competition.

It was mentioned that the Northern Neck Master Gardeners had submitted and won an award at the national level, however the MG who submitted the entry was not present to comment.

Christy was asked to e-mail the proposal out to unit reps. indicating the comment period would end by Nov 30th. and the proposal would be voted on during the December meeting.

P. Diane Relf Education Endowment Fund :

Betty Villers- the scholarship committee completed the duties for 2008 and disbanded. Paul Campbell has agreed to become the chair for the 2009 committee.

Paul will begin to select new committee members and discuss ways to educate unit reps, Extension Agents and Master Gardeners about the availability of scholarships.

State Fair- Christy Brennan, Chair

The 2008 VA State Fair was a huge success. Although it rained the first three days, we had very good contact numbers and great participation. Over 6,000 contacts were reported and this does not include the last weekend!

Over 25 counties were represented by the various units that volunteered their time to make this event a great Success!

The DNA experiment was a huge hit with kids, parents and teachers- our reported contact numbers may have been a little low due to the crowd at the demonstrations. Even Governor Kaine's wife and children came by to participate in our demo.

The "new and improved" Hanover Landcare Stewards Firewise Landscaping model made its debut and will be featured in a presentation by Frank Reilly of the VMGA, Dave Close (VCE Master Gardener Coordinator from VA Tech) and Barb Steward of the National Park Service.

This was the last year the Fair will be held at the Richmond Raceway Complex. I would like to ask permission to form a steering committee for next year. If anyone is interested on serving on this committee please let me know. We will try to have a meeting with the State Fair in January to start planning.

Thank you to all the Master Gardeners that have volunteered with the State Fair.

Extension Liaison - Dave Close, MG Coordinator

- 2008 International Master Gardener Coordinator Conference was a success overall. 51 registered attendees from 25 states. Even distribution from across the country.
- MGCAT met in September. Have developed full list of conference topics and proposed speakers. Michael Dirr will not be able to come in 2009. Will be looking to get Alan Armitage in place of Dirr. Goody bags: Scotts Miracle Grow is offering free samples. Encore Azaleas wants to provide free bags and flower samples.
- Still working on handbook revision. Contemplating delaying the release to ensure it is done correctly. Maryland just released their updated version.
- May have yet another possible solution for receiving and answering questions via email. Have delayed testing it until after the National MGC conference.
- Horticulture Department had retreat 3-4 weeks ago; focused our efforts, redefined some priorities; good for morale.
- National review of MG program is proceeding. Will be collecting first round of data by January/February 2009.
- Still talking with potential corporate sponsor. Didn't work out to announce them for state fair for reasons I cannot reveal. With the recent economic downturn it will slow down things (seeing this at the national level with Scotts and the National MG program & eXtension). Did have a meeting with CALS Development Director, Dawn Lerch, and the VT Foundation Corporate Relations Director to develop strategy of what steps to take next.
- Scotts can offer to do advanced trainings for MGs on a variety of topics; have been doing this in GA for a couple of years. .
- Had meeting in mid-September with USFS to discuss MG involvement with detection and monitoring communities for EAB. Proposed to develop and offer training for MGs to work with HOAs to raise awareness and teach homeowners how to be on the lookout for this pest in their own yards.
- Will be doing a presentation at the 2009 Backyards and Beyond Conference in November. Will be co-presenting with Barb Stewart of the NPS and Frank Reilly and highlighting the LCS module. Had photo opp with NPS, VA DOF, Hanover and Louisa MGs to bring attention to LCS and the fall fire season which begins on October 15. CALS communication office sent out press release before State Fair of VA. Roanoke Times picked it up and will be doing a feature story in their garden column next week (will be interviewed Monday by reporter). Regional firewise training will be offered on December 8, in Charlottesville. Announcement went out today. Louisa will be offering county-level training in November.

- Governor Kaine announced budget reductions for FY 09. University has been cut \$11.2 million: 8.9 million from University Division and 2.3 million from VCE. Will translate into the “permanent elimination of selected programs.” Will be working with university VPs and Deans for the next three weeks to determine exact strategy. They had been charged to devise contingency plans for 5%, 10%, and 15% reductions. Salary adjustments will be deferred until July 2009 (typically announced in November) as a possible strategy to meet reductions. Dean Quisenberry has asked stakeholders to continue communicating with elected officials about the relevance of Extension and Extension programs.
- Ideas taken away from the MGC Conference on delivering MG training by distance ed. and online methods. Recent budget constraints may make this necessary in rural units.

Unit Reports:

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

Presidents Report: Betty Villers

President’s Question of the Day : “What educational opportunities are offered to Master Gardeners in their unit”

It was good to hear what educational opportunities each unit is offering the members. The VMGA needs to establish a committee that will determine the educational needs of the members and supplement the opportunities offered.

Unfinished Business-

Sites for the VMGA Bi-Monthly Meetings –

- The current 2008 meeting calendar is :
December- Clarksville
- For 2009 the schedule is:
February-Charlottesville
April- Louisa
June- VA Tech -MG College
August- Lynchburg
October – Lexington area
December- Open

Patty Gamache has volunteered to be in charge of goody bags for MG College. Please contact her with any information on freebies or potential contributors. All items should be sent to Pattie in Bedford prior to MG College. Plan on at least 325 items for registered MG’s and speakers.

We need volunteers to serve on the education committee as they move to a new direction. Several ideas were mentioned, to combine basic and advanced classes with units, develop a partnership with regional units presenting educational events. Please let Betty know if you are interested in serving on the committee.

Remember the meeting planned in Henrico in Feb. by the Communication/Unit Support Committee concerning “Strategies for Master Gardener unit’s survival after budget cuts”.

Please have unit members look at the recommendations on the web site for talk points concerning the budget cut. Remember the purpose is not creating form letters but to use this as a guide to inform our representatives about the Master Gardener program and its role in Extension education.

New Business:

George Graine asked if the VMGA could ask VA Tech to create and an addendum to update the PMG rather than updating and publishing the entire document. Master Gardener’s could easily update their PMG by adding the updates as published, potentially saving a lot of money on publishing and distribution costs.

George also asked if the PMG could be available to Master Gardeners on-line for an easy reference. Dave said he would look in to the possibility.

Betty reminded unit reps to send in unit reports to Christy Brennan with the suggested information for the newsletter and web site.

Betty asked those present to be thinking of ways we could sell the value of VMGA membership to all Master Gardeners who are not members.

Next VMGA meeting will be held on Dec13th – Clarksville at the Lamplighter Restaurant 10:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christy Brennan, VMGA Secretary

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report

October 11, 2008

Data As OF: **Balance Sheet**
9/30/2008

Assets

Checking Account Balance	\$7,308.82
PDR Education Endowment CD Balance	\$13,566.24
Reserve CD #1 Balance	\$0.00
Reserve CD #2 Balance	\$4,618.20
Future Dues CD Balance	\$5,710.21
Fundraising Inventory	\$1,137.57
Total Assets	\$32,341.04

Liabilities

Unearned Income - Future Dues	\$6,075.01
Coordinator Endowment Funds Payable	\$525.00
Coordinator Endowment Planned Gifts Payable	\$0.00
Restricted Gifts for Scholarships	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$6,600.01

Net Assets

Accumulated Earnings	\$20,496.57
Current Year Earnings	\$5,244.46
Total Net Assets	\$25,741.03

**Total Liabilities
and Net Assets** \$32,341.04

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report

October 11, 2008

Checking Balance as of	7/31/2008		\$11,958.97
	Receipts		\$343.23
	Coord Endowment Gifts	\$100.00	
	Dues FY 10-19	\$0.00	
	FY 09 dues (current FY)	\$84.00	
	Education	\$0.00	
	Fundraising	\$159.23	
	Gift for EEF	\$0.00	
	Restricted Gift for Scholarship	\$0.00	
	Disbursements		-\$208.49
	Comm/Support	\$0.00	
	Coord Endowment Cmte	\$0.00	
	Coord Endow Gift Transfers	\$0.00	
	Education	\$0.00	
	Education Scholarship-Spec	\$0.00	
	EEF Scholarships	\$0.00	
	Elections	\$0.00	
	Fund Raising Cmte	\$0.00	
	Fund Raising Gifts to Endowment	\$0.00	
	Marketing	\$0.00	
	Membership & Roster	-\$22.68	
	Newsletter	-\$185.81	
	State Fair	\$0.00	
	Officers Expense		
	President	\$0.00	
	Vice President	\$0.00	
	Secretary	\$0.00	
	Treasurer	\$0.00	
	Transfers		-\$4,784.89
	EEF Gift Transfers	\$0.00	
	Lifetime Dues Transfers	\$0.00	
	Reserve CD Transfers	-\$4,784.89	
	Fundraising Inventory Transfer	\$0.00	
Checking Balance as of	9/30/2008		\$7,308.82
	Interest Income on Reserve and EEF CD's	\$175.75	
	Interest Income on Future Dues CD	\$91.20	

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc
Treasurer's Report

October 11, 2008

Year to Date Income & Expenses to Budget FY09

Income YTD

Committee	Budget	Income
Membership		
FY 09 (Lifetime/Prior Year)	\$3,600.00	\$4,356.00
FY 09 (Current FY)	\$1,600.00	\$792.00
Subtotal	\$5,200.00	\$5,148.00
Education	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Fundraising	\$1,000.00	\$904.88
Gift for EEF		\$15.00
Interest Income		\$266.95
Restricted Gift for Scholarship	\$0.00	\$0.00
total	\$9,200.00	\$6,334.83

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
Education Scholarship-Spec	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
EEF Scholarships	\$600.00	-\$600.00	\$0.00
Elections	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fund Raising Cmte	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fund Raising Gifts to Endowment	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Marketing	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Membership & Roster	\$2,000.00	-\$149.88	\$1,850.12
Newsletter	\$1,300.00	-\$185.81	\$1,114.19
State Fair	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$350.00
Officers Expense			
President	\$125.00	-\$73.09	\$51.91
Vice President	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$25.00
Secretary	\$35.00	\$0.00	\$35.00
Treasurer	\$65.00	-\$81.59	-\$16.59
total	\$9,200.00	-\$1,090.37	

Year to Date Endowment & Restricted Funds Transactions FY09

Fund	Balance to Start Fiscal Year	Funds Received	Transfers	Balance
Coordinator Endowment	\$0.00	\$525.00	\$0.00	\$525.00
Lifetime Dues FY 10-19	\$132.00	\$324.00	\$0.00	\$456.00
Education Endowment	\$123.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$138.00
Planned Gifts to Coord Endow	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Reserve Funds CD's				
total				\$1,119.00