

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc.
Bi-Monthly Board Meeting
Saturday December 12, 2009
Hampton Roads AREC
Hosted by VA Beach Master Gardeners

Attendance:

(Arlington/ Alexandria) Joe Kelly; (Bedford) Patty and Bob Gamache; (Chesapeake) Pinky Derieux; (Fauquier) Jim Scibek; (Gloucester) Bonnie Bernard; (Green Spring) Cyndi Bishop, (Halifax) Bill McCaleb; (Hanover) Cheri Haggerty, Christy Brennan; (James City Co./Williamsburg) Jim and Nelda Pressly; (Louisa) Ira Wallace, Tina Chaleki, Edna Musser; (Prince George) Cheryl Sebera; (Prince William) Janet and Bill Scott; (Rockbridge) David Mims; (Newport News) Peggy Fox; (Norfolk) Don Snipes; (Northern Neck) Edward Munns; (Suffolk) Nita Holt ; (Virginia Beach) Paul Campbell, Johanna Culver, Jessica O'Connor, Susan French, Vera Geddes, Jim and Mary Ann Kincaid, Fran Shelton, Karen Renda, Carol Roll, Betty Villers, Eileen Walsh, Peg Ward; (Va. Tech) Dawn Lerch, Dave Close; (Western Tidewater) Betty Jo Hendrix.

Call to Order:

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

Unit representative Fran Shelton welcomed everyone to VA Beach and the Hampton Roads AREC. Fran has been President of the VA Beach Master Gardeners and just completed a two year term as the VMGA Unit rep from VA Beach.

Fran introduced Karen Renda the newly elected president of the VA Beach MGs and Jim Kincaid the new VMGA representative.

Susan French, the VA Beach Extension Agent was introduced. The VB organization was formed in 1982. Since that time, they have trained 11,000 MG's and have 250 active MG's and 24 main projects which have produced thousands of contacts. VA Beach is very appreciative of the Master Gardener program due to the commitment of the volunteers which readily assumes leadership and responsibility.

Introductions:

Betty asked every member to introduce themselves and the unit and committee or office they represented.

The Unit representative Rooster was passed around and representatives were asked to update information and return the form back to Christy.

Minutes – Christy Brennan

The minutes of the October meeting were accepted as posted on the VMGA web site.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Scott

Bill presented the treasurer's report. The last education event almost broke even; the event was well attended and well organized –over 100 attended.

There were no questions concerning the treasurer's report and the report will be filed for audit. (The report is attached).

Committee Reports:**Newsletter- Peggy Fox- Chair**

Peggy thanked all units for articles submitted for the newsletter.

She reminded the reps to let us know what is going on in your area by sending her articles or links to your unit's newsletter.

Unit reports are sent to Cheryl Sebera – Cheryl will be sending a template to use for unit reports to include prevalent information for the newsletter. Unit reports are due by December 20th.

Membership- Mary Ann Kincaid-Chair

As of December 8, there are 548 members of the Virginia Master Gardener Association. Of these, 379 are Active members; 6 are Auxiliary members; and 163 are Lifetime members.

This is an increase of 8 members since the October 2009 report. There are 21 more members than reported in December 2008.

Finance Committee- Ted Jenks

Ted was not present and there was no report.

Unit Support- Frank Reilly – Chair

The committee consists of Pinky Derieux, Kerry Goldmeyer, Karen Sacasky, and Frank Reilly and whoever else we need. Frank was not present and Cheri Haggerty read the report.

The unit support committee disseminated information obtained by Loudoun MGs via the VCE List Serve and answered questions from a unit concerning obtaining IRS Tax-Exempt Status.

Communication Committee

Members: Betsy Lyon, Dawn Meyerriecks, Cheri Haggerty, Kathryn Debnar, Shelby Snyder, Tom Bolt, George Graine, Jim Kincaid and Chair Frank Reilly and whoever else we can get.

1. November 12th marked our 11th anniversary as VMGA.net. We've grown from a single page giving the minutes of the last meeting to a large web site with more than 240 pages of content almost 200,000 (198806) hits annually.
2. Since the October meeting there have been 2403 visitors visiting more than 26499 items at VMGA.net. The web page has been updated on 44 separate occasions.
3. The most popular pages in the last two months have been Educational Events, membership, about VMGA, Calendar, resources, and Minutes; but more than 58% of our page views come in through the front page.
4. Last month alone 117 discrete visitors came directly from Google. People search for us and find us.
5. Kathryn Debnar is currently accepting changes to the calendar.
6. Dawn Meyerriecks in addition to her Webmaster role is keeping current news items on our News page.
7. We are currently working on the MG College Recruiting presentation. We could use some photos of activities. The presentation will be distributed in January.

Education Committee -Barbara Geer – Chair

Members: Barbara Geer, Betty Jo Hendrix, Lori Hamlett, Patty Richard, Mildred McDuffie, Ira Wallace.

Ira Wallace gave the report. 129 attended the program in October, which filled very fast and early on there was a waiting list, 20 people were turned away. There was very good feedback and the Master Naturalist were very appreciative and would like to be included in a joint program again. Monticello really enjoyed the MG's and more than half of the attendees went on the tour. Pre-announcement: Save the date April 17th –Location Roanoke, VA Western College.

Betty Jo Hendrix gave the report: Plans are proceeding for the Mini Master Gardener College titled "Leading Edges in Consumer Horticulture" scheduled for March 27th at VA State University. This is a beautiful facility that VSU has provided and they have provided some funding for the event. The University will be closed for spring break and there is ample parking right in front of the building. The Fee has yet to be determined. Registration will begin on Jan 15th.

Coordinator Endowment Committee: Kathryn Debnar- Chair

Kathryn was not present, Dawn Lerch gave the report. This will be Dawn's last time as a VA Tech employee of the Development Office. She is retiring and returning to Chesterfield County.

Total contributions are \$308,911.37. Dawn would like to remind all of us that it is up to us to help secure the MG Coordinator position. Remember that if every active Master Gardener pledged the 50 / 5 the endowment would be paid.

In order to receive documentation for a tax deduction all donations must be submitted to VT. Make checks payable to "VT Foundation", add Account #886119 in the memo line and mail to: CALS Development Office, 215 Hutcheson Hall (0402) Blacksburg VA 24061.

Virginia Green Industry: Cheri Haggerty- VMGA Representative

The December VGIC meeting was held in the Americrafts building at The Meadows (State Fair of Virginia). The Council set its Legislative Agenda for 2010 with efforts to be focused on Water Quality.

The 2010 Go Green Festival will be again the second week in September at the Science Museum of Virginia.

Other highlights of the meeting included:

Report from the VirginiaAgribusiness Council working with the VGIC:

- A member of Governor-elect McDonnell's transition working group for Agriculture and Forestry. Will be developing a report to include top issues for our industry including recommendations for implementing his campaign policies.
- Discussed fertilizer application issues with Virginia Green Industry Council Board.
- Welcomed Dr. Alan Grant, Dean of the Va. Tech College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, at a reception in Richmond.
- Council was recognized by the Va. Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts for its role in the Water Quality Partnership (for Ag BMP cost-share funding).
- Submitted Council's concerns regarding H.R. 3852, the Chesapeake Bay Reauthorization Act, in comments to the US House Agriculture Subcommittee for their Chesapeake Bay hearing, and coordinated the submission of similar comments from 63 state and national organizations for the hearing record.

The VGIC is concerned that the EPA may be using outdated models for their plans on bay restoration. It doesn't appear that new technology and data is being sought from VT.

Education Endowment committee- Leslie Paulson-Chair

Leslie was not present but asked Betty to report. Committee members are: Mary Ann Kincaid, Debbie Hizer, Jack Prince, Jane Wyman, Jim Revell, and Jeff Goggin. She reminded us that it is every rep's responsibility to get the word out concerning the availability of scholarships. These scholarships were restructured to represent the needs of the larger and smaller units. Please remind Unit Coordinators and Extension Agents to nominate a recipient.

Fund Raising- Patty Gamache -Chair

Patty reminded everyone she is new to the committee so please work with her as she learns the ropes. E-mail Patty any ideas for new items; she currently is looking into obtaining sweatshirts. Betty reported sales of \$876.00 of items since the last meeting. The "neverenoughplants" e-mail address has shared link to continue to obtain orders.

State Fair- Christy Brennan

Master Gardeners had a large venue in the Fish and Plant Center and had over 20 tables available for demonstrations and publications. MGs shared the Strawberry DNA Experiment again this year on the student tour and shared sustainable land care and gardening practices and reported over 10,736 contacts and hundreds of volunteer hours.

The new venue has a lot of opportunities to offer Master Gardeners and we hope more units will choose to participate next year.

Special thank you to Tina Chaleki for donation of strawberries and Laurie Clarkson for recruiting volunteers.

VCE- Dave Close

1. Dave polled the unit reps to see if there would be interest in a webinar on recycling plastic containers? A positive response from unit reps that were present. The MOBot model would be used. John Ignosh pulled together a webinar on Plastofuel (a process developed at Penn State for creating a fuel source from recycled plastic); this was part of an effort to explore possible solutions to recycle horticulture waste plastic in VA.
2. Working with Jonah Fogel, a Community Viability Specialist, on mapping all of the school and community gardening resources across the Commonwealth. This is part of a larger effort to promote the Farm to School program in VA and increase awareness and participation of local communities in community gardening initiatives. Agents in the newly redrawn Southeast District are pulling together some resources to have a statewide advisory group on community gardening due to the increase in requests for local support of community gardening efforts.
3. All of the VCE strategic planning meetings concluded this week; the initial report should be ready by February and things in place by July 1, 2010 for implementation
4. Redrawing of District lines occurred a couple of weeks ago and as of December 7, 2009, VCE went from 6 to 4 districts: Northern, Southeast, Central, and Southwest; the four offices will be located in Harrisonburg (Northern – Cyndi Marston), Richmond (Southeast – Lonnie Johnson), Danville (Central – Lonnelle Marsh), and Abingdon (Southwest – Mike Martin); once the strategic plan is announced and official, it will take 12-18 months to transition through some of the changes
5. Under the direction of Dr. Joyce Latimer, he enlisted a team of Extension Agents and Extension MG volunteers to meet in late January to begin the planning process for the 2011 edition of the Home & Grounds PMG. They will meet to identify key issues and create a plan of action to come up with the 2011 edition incorporating the necessary changes.

6. At the same time he was collecting names for the PMG Advisory Team, he also collected names of volunteers to serve on a MG Handbook advisory team. Hope to have a meeting in late winter to begin the process of planning the next update to the MG Handbook.
7. State Record Keeping System update – last word was that the legal counsel office at VT was working with the legal counsel of UC Davis to iron out the details of our contract to purchase their volunteer management system. It should be in place soon, although there is not a confirmed date.
8. Extension MGs from Fairfax County have completed the first Extension Publication by a volunteer. It is on cold-hardy palms that grow well in VA. It will be reviewed by a couple of agents, and then submitted to VT for final approval and formatting and electronic publishing. They hope to create a series of fact sheets to supplement this initial pub.
9. MGCAT meeting scheduled for November 30 was postponed until January 18. So far the following individuals have been lined up as keynote speakers: Rita Randolph, Mike Raupp, Jeffrey Gillman, & Kirk Brown as John Bartram. In January, we will button up the additional concurrent session topics and the leadership development training. The registration fee for 2010 will be \$150, up \$25 from the past 5 years. Sunday morning has been added back into the schedule and is when Kirk Brown will appear as John Bartram.
10. The website has been updated. Please check it out for the new look and one new feature: an adobe connect session on risk management has been uploaded to the site for anyone to download and watch. It lasts just under one hour. Similar sessions can be held and/or recorded for future use. His intent is to record one on one what it means to be a VCE MG volunteer and post it before the January training classes begin.
11. Dr. Alan Grant began as the new Dean for CALS on October 1. Dave met with Dr. Grant on November 20 to bring him up to speed on the VCE MG program. He is familiar with the MG program and has a positive impression of it already. He will be making an appearance at the 2010 MG College.
12. Dave met with Interim VCE Director, Dr. Rick Rudd, on December 4 to discuss how we can proactively plan for the impending restructuring of VCE statewide and how it will affect local Extension MG programs. Still too many unanswered questions to really be able to pin this down. Bottom line, there will be changes and we will survive them.
13. Emerald Ash Borer Project – working on developing an online module on EAB to increase awareness in VA and eventually nationally on the presence and impact of EAB. We are working with agents in Northern VA to increase public awareness through garden shows and events. The module will be hosted by the National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN) group out of Univ. of FL. NPDN is the group responsible for first-detector training that some of you may have participated in a few years ago with Sudden Oak Death (in cooperation with the North Central IPM Center)
14. Land Care Steward Project – contract with the NPS will conclude on December 31. He will announce when the new book is available online.
15. Dave will be sending out an email next week asking every MG unit to submit their annual totals of volunteer hours and contacts for 2009 to include in the 2009 annual report to VCE as part of the annual faculty report.

Presentation:

Betty mentioned that this classroom was dedicated one year ago. The photos on the wall are from the Display Gardens at the Hampton Roads AREC. She introduced Pete Shultz, the Director of the Hampton Roads AREC.

Pete gave a power point presentation of the VA ARECs.

ARECs of Virginia are to serve VA Agricultural needs. There are 13 AREC sites across the state encompassing over 3900 acres. Pete showed slides of each AREC and explained the location and primary purpose of each location.

There will be a tour of the Hampton Roads AREC's New Sustainable Garden after the meeting.

Presidents Report-

There was a request from four units for a letter to interns about VMGA and membership. This letter was sent by e-mail to each unit representative and is available for future interest.

Cyndi Bishop and Joan Richards from Green Spring MGs have put together a power point presentation for the VMGA for their introduction training class. It is available for all units.

Betty is continuing to receive e-mails and request from other groups, including fund raising ideas and information concerning Master Gardeners volunteering across borders.

Kathryn Debnar is in the process of creating an index of power point presentations and slide programs which units have and would share with other units. Please send Kathryn an e-mail of the program titles and unit's name for the directory.

February is the 20th Anniversary of the VMGA; the first meeting was held 1990. Betty would like to encourage each unit rep to invite a guest to the meeting. Past officers will also be invited.

IRS- all units must file an IRS 990-N e-postcard on an annual basis, no matter how small the proceeds from the fund raising efforts. You must submit the form electronically. Bill Scott can answer any questions concerning the post card.

Please submit unit reports to Cheryl Sebera by December 20th. Include something new to share with other units. Include both good and bad learning experiences so other groups can learn from your group.

Fiskars – has gardening grants for tools and –Betty has sent an e-mail to unit reps on the grant information.

Meetings for 2010 have been taken – Betty encourages groups to think about hosting one of the meetings in 2011.

2010 meetings:

April 10- Gloucester

June- VA Tech

August 14- Newport News

October 9- Galax

December 11- Fluvanna

Unfinished Business-

Silent auction – we are looking for a volunteer or a unit to handle the MG College silent auction for next year, this is a large fund raiser for the Coordinator Endowment.

We are looking for a volunteer to take records of VMGA and update the history of the VMGA.

A suggestion to divide the missing years into small sections might make the task more attractive to volunteers. Please let Betty know if interested.

2009 VCE External Stakeholder Dialogues meeting:

Report by Cheri Haggerty, VMGA representative

10-14-2009

Attendees included external stakeholders such as VMGA, VGIF, DNR, VDOF, VA Farm Bureau, farmers, nurserymen, etc.

The Facilitators included Jim Riddle, Rick Rudd and many others from VCE at VT.

The intent of the meeting was to hear about VCE and these agencies collaborations and other mutual programs to ultimately focus VCE programs. This was not in response to budget shortfalls but rather explore VCE's focus on programming.

These strategic meetings will end by December 1st, with a new strategic plan made by February, with dissemination in July 2010.

Audience was asked to name the successes of VCE. The list isn't in any particular order.

1. Farm to school
2. Master Gardener programs
3. Youth development, including resources for parenting
4. Introduction of different crop varieties
5. 4H clubs
6. Youth gardening, organic gardening
7. Insect and weed identification and management
8. Certification for pesticide use
9. Programs focused on collection of pesticides, commercial and residential
10. Richmond Area Food System council
11. Virginia Biological Farming Conference
12. Family and Community Education programs
13. Adult training for youth development
14. Specialty crops, experimental, Virginia State University

Next we were asked to think about the mission of VCE, and how to improve VCE's influence in three specific areas...Economic, Environmental, and Social. Then we were asked how VCE could implement these ideas and whether there were parts of VCE's current mission that could be eliminated. Common themes emerged, listed in no particular order.

1. Families are under stress (job loss, loss of homes, etc) due to the economic downturn. Children in these families are suffering in greater numbers from stress-related issues and support for such families is critical.
2. Financial issues in families have led to more people working (when possible) and fewer volunteers.
3. Many people in communities do not know what resources are available through VCE and so there should be a mechanism to make VCE's role part of community discussions.
4. Use of pesticides and other chemicals that are toxic to land and water should be regulated, primarily through communication with communities and interested groups so that information is made available to provide less toxic alternatives.
5. VCE should be more involved in urban planning so that communities lose the minimum habitat and so that developers are educated about alternative ways to design developments, retaining trees, topsoil, etc.

6. 4H programs are vital because they involve children in farming and agriculture and other programs that instill good habits with respect to the land and its inhabitants.

7. Master Gardener programs are important because these volunteers are educators and help to disseminate information coming from university research efforts.

8. VCE provides a valuable service to a number of constituencies and NONE of its programs should be reduced or eliminated!

Nominating Committee: Jim Scibek, Paul Campbell, Cheri Haggerty

The committee communicated by e-mail and according to the by-laws the slate of officers should be presented 150 days before the annual meeting.

The new slate of officers presented:

Bill Scott- President

Christy Brennan- Vice President

Jim Kincaid – Treasurer

Peggy Fox- Secretary

This will be the first time the election will be held by electronic ballot. Those without internet access will be sent paper copies of the ballot. Results will be announced at the April meeting.

New Business:

The VMGA executive board will be meeting with the VCE, College of AG. & Life and Sciences (CALs), Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), and Hort Department Administrators in Charlottesville on Feb 3rd. Betty will be sending an e-mail to ask for questions and concerns the groups would like us to present at the meeting.

Cheri Haggerty – motion was made and passed to renew \$50.00 VGIC membership dues.

Announcements:

Bud Gregory passed away yesterday. VMGA would like to recognize his contribution to VMGA, the board will decide at what level.

In-climate Weather policy: In case of bad weather check the VMGA web site for cancellation information.

Brent and Becky's Bulbs are having a 75% off sale and it might be worth the member's time to make a trip to the shop.

Betty asked all of the VA Beach MGs that put this meeting together to stand and be recognized.

Next VMGA meeting will be held on Feb 13th, 2009 - 10:00 in Suffolk, hosted by the Suffolk Master Gardeners.

Schedule of meetings:

February 13th: Suffolk

April 10th: Gloucester

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christy Brennan, VMGA Secretary

VMGA December 2009
Financial Statements

Balance Sheet

Data As OF: 11/30/2009

Assets

Checking Account Balance	\$7,477.39
PDR Education Endowment CD Balance	\$14,148.74
Reserve CD #2 Balance	\$4,788.41
Future Dues CD Balance	\$5,990.11
Fundraising Inventory	\$2,501.16
Total Assets	\$34,905.81

Liabilities

Unearned Income - Future Dues	\$5,799.01
Coordinator Endowment Funds Payable	\$528.00
Coordinator Endowment Planned Gifts Payable	\$0.00
Restricted Gifts for Scholarships	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$6,327.01

Net Assets

Accumulated Earnings	\$22,818.07
Current Year Earnings	\$5,760.73
Total Net Assets	\$28,578.80
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$34,905.81

