



**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
August 11, 2009**

Attendees –

Board Members Present: Nat Gruesen, Glenn Dresner, Peg Turrentine, Marilyn Almon, Robert Goehring, Ginny Grant, Jane Gray, Jodie Douglass and Susan Peacock

Board Members Absent: Brenda Dresner, Cindy Fairbanks, Mary Beth McCaughey, and Barbara Brannon

AgriLife Extension Advisor Present:
Master Volunteer Coordinator, Fort Bend County – Margo McDowell

AgriLife Extension Advisor Present:
CEA - Horticulture – Shari Koch

Quorum Present? Yes

Call to Order – Nat Gruesen called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes – After a motion by Nat Gruesen and a second by Jodie Douglass, the amended minutes of the July 7, 2009 Board meeting were approved by all.

Officer and Committee Reports:

President – Nat Gruesen

- Nat noted that James Buckley has resigned as co-chair of the Greenhouse committee and therefore his seat on the Board as well.
- Nat also clarified that the September Board meeting will be held on September 8th, not September 14th as listed on the Agenda.

Vice President – Glenn Dresner

- No report.

Secretary – Susan Peacock

- No report.

Treasurer – Peg Turrentine

- Peg's report is attached to the minutes.
- Peg requested clarification on how many dinners will be paid for Board members who attended and assisted with the dinner held for the Veggie Specialist class.

Past President – Mary Beth McCaughey

- Mary Beth was not present.

Awards – Jodie Douglass

- Jodie's report is attached.
- Jodie announced that the Awards Committee has been organized and is starting to make plans.

Communications – Robert Goehring

- Robert gave an update on the progress of the *Grapevine* newsletter. He has not received the files yet and has asked Margo for some of the old files. He will probably stick to an every other month or possibly monthly schedule. He will be asking the President and Vice President as well as others to write material and is interested in garden stories. Articles sent to Robert will be forwarded to Marilyn and then Margo for review.
- Robert would like the Board to increase the allowance to cover the purchase MS Publisher 2007 which would assist with the *Grapevine* and other projects. Jodie made a motion that funds be allocated for this purchase. Jane seconded the motion and it was approved by all.
- Robert announced that the new FBMG Blog has been averaging between 35 – 105 hits/day.
- Robert also stated that he plans to resign as Communications Director for the Board in November but will continue his role in the editing of the *Grapevine*.

Community Relations – Brenda Dresner

- No report; Brenda was not present.
- Glenn announced that dinner with Stephen Chamblee will be at La Casona at 5 pm before Steven's presentation at the monthly meeting on 8/20/09 and encouraged everyone who can to attend.
- Jodie stated that the Green Thumb seminars have had an average attendance of 22 persons this year.

Fundraising – Barbara Brannon

- No report; Barbara was not present.

Greenhouse – Glenn Dresner

- Glenn's report is attached to the minutes.
- Glenn stated that he will be talking to James on Friday about the work for Sugar Land Garden Club next month.

Landscape –Cindy Fairbanks and Jane Gray, co-chairs

- Cindy and Jane's report is attached to the minutes.
- Jane announced that Justin with Pond Pro has completed the water garden cleaning and did a super job.
- Jane also reported that there was a good crowd working in the gardens on the Work Day and a lot was accomplished.
- Jane has received the irrigation report from Jim.

Member Relations – Marilyn Almon

- Marilyn's report is attached.
- Marilyn reported that there are now 195 names on the Member Roster list, including 26 of the 28 Fall 2008 graduates.
- There are a number of fall activities planned and Marilyn will be sending out an APBeees about these.
- Marilyn has a call into Jim Hunt with TxDOT to get more information about the Painting Texas with Wildflowers Project. Thirty-one other counties have participated in this project and Marilyn will check on what areas are available.
- The complete compilation of the member opinion survey was distributed to the Board along with Marilyn's report prior to the meeting. Glenn asked what would be done with the results of the survey and there was a discussion about reviewing and using the information gained. It was decided to ask Chairs to review the information and that a task force would be created to consider the results and formulate responses. Marilyn, Ginny, Margo and Shari will meet to plan a strategic planning session.

Youth Activities – Ginny Grant

- Ginny's report is attached.
- Ginny reported that the Kids Kamp held in June went very well and was under-budget.

Standing Committee Reports:

Governance Committee

- No report.

Extension Service Advisor Reports:

CEA – Horticulture – Shari Koch

- Shari discussed the new state regulations about irrigation. There are new rules and regulations from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that will go into effect January 1, 2010. One of these is: *Effective January 1, 2010, a licensed irrigator or a licensed irrigation technician must be on site at all times during installation, repair or service of a system.* Fort Bend County will need to comply with these new rules/regulations and maintain documentation to demonstrate compliance. More information about this is available on the web sites for TCEQ and HG CIA (Houston Gulf Coast Irrigation Association).

- Shari also brought up the topic of the windmill that was purchased by FBMG but was not able to be used. She said a decision needs to be made about what to do with the windmill and action taken by the end of the year. \$3000.00 was paid for the windmill and it is not assembled. A discussion was held and it was decided to offer the windmill for sale to members. This will be announced to members in an APBeees and bids submitted to Robert.

Master Volunteer Coordinator, Fort Bend County – Margo McDowell

- Margo announced that the new FBMG Class (Fall 09) will start tomorrow at 9 a.m. There will be 30 people in the class and the tuition is \$160.00. There are new books for the class and the new text (with and without the binder) will be available to FBMG members for purchase. Margo stated that the YPS system is working well.
- Margo said that several MGs have met about the upcoming AGtivity Barn. There is interest in bringing back the butterfly exhibit but not to use the old cage. There is an approved Butterfly Castle cage now and options are being investigated. The bee demonstrator can use the current cage and will reimburse FBCMG for it. There will also be an exhibit of Square Foot Gardening at the AGtivity Barn.

Old Business:

Unfinished Business from Prior Year

- There were two updates on items on the Unfinished Business list:
 - Item # 3 (Master Gardener opinion surveys) is now complete.
 - Item # 17 (Creation of a storm prep list) is now complete.

JMG Educational Grants

- Ginny suggested that the second financial grant for \$1500.00 which was awarded by the Board to JMG be rescinded. Jodie made the motion for this; Glenn seconded it and it was approved by all.

New Business:

Term Limits

- Nat introduced the topic of extending officer term limits for discussion. This topic was originally suggested due to the difficulty that the Nominating Committee often has in finding members who are willing to serve as Board officers.
- The Board considered five options which included:
 - Initial one-year term with a maximum of two years (as current bylaw provides)
 - One two-year term
 - Initial one-year term with a maximum of three years if approved
 - Initial one-year term with a maximum of three years
 - Two year term limit with alternating terms

- There was a discussion of the options as well as if extending the term limits would solve the problem of finding members willing to serve in leadership roles.
- It was decided not to consider any of the options for extending officer term limits and try to approach the problem in other ways.

Fence

- Glenn introduced a discussion on the status of the fence being considered for the extension grounds. He stated that the black cyclone fence is attractive and could be used to better define some of the areas. The decision regarding the fence has been tabled until November to get information on any vandalism that has occurred.

Liability Insurance

- Ginny has talked to two agents regarding liability insurance; one in El Campo and one with the Alliance for Non-Profits in California. She is getting quotes for general liability policies from these agents. Coverage of \$1 million per occurrence with a \$2 million cap was suggested. An audit may be required before coverage. Additional information about attorney fees is needed.

Visa card

- Robert brought up for discussion the use of the FBCMG credit card. He has had requests to use the card to buy books and a speaker hotel bill although the card was obtained for exclusive use for the website and domain. He would like to turn the card over to the Treasurer if it is to be used for other purposes. Peg mentioned that there are sometimes other situations where use of the credit card is needed. Susan will research previous minutes to determine the original intent for the card stated in the motion to obtain it. Robert will transfer possession of the card to Peg as Treasurer at the meeting tomorrow.

Other:

- Marilyn asked that the date for the dedication of the Outdoor Classroom be changed from the tentative date of October 21st to October 28th. This is Item # 15 on the 2008 Unfinished Business list.
- Margo inquired about the Entymology Group budget. Nat stated that he has asked additional questions for more detailed information, especially regarding printing costs and is waiting to hear back.

Nat adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 8th at 6:30 p.m. in the Extension Annex.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Peacock
Secretary, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
Amended and submitted 9/8/09

August 2009 Greenhouse Report

From: Glenn Dresner

Please find the report on the Greenhouse activities for the period July-August, 2009.

- Several of the herbs to be sold at the Sugar Land Garden Club Plant sale were re-propagated again due to failure of the cuttings to start. This work was done on July 29 with Jane Schnell taking the lead in this project with several "Wednesday" Master Gardeners providing wonderful assistance.
- A new mist system was added to one half of the "mist tent". A similar mist system was added to one of the tables in the greenhouse (Table 9). It is the intent of this new mist system to provide a better watering of new propagated plant cuttings. The herb cuttings for the Sugar Land Garden Plant sale were placed under the new mist nozzles.
- The evaporative cooler paper elements were washed along with the PVC header that supplies the water to the top of the cooler elements. Examination of the holes in the PVC header showed that many of them were distributing low flow to the elements. The end caps on the header were removed and the header flushed. A great deal of sediment was flushed out. Reexamination of the water distribution from the holes showed significant improvement in water supplied to the evaporative cooler elements. This increase in water flow will hopefully provide additional cooling of the atmosphere in the greenhouse.

Should you have any questions or comments on these items please feel free to contact me.

Have a TERRIFIC DAY!!!!

Glenn

August 2009 Landscaping Report

From: Cindy Fairbanks & Jane Gray

Berry Patch

David and crew are consistently working every Wednesday and workday.

Butterfly Garden

Even though Barbara has been in Scotland, others have been working pruning and cleaning. It looks beautiful.

Circle Gardens

Georgia and Becky were at workday and Wednesday adding new Vincas. Kathy Hulfish and committee members have been doing a great job keeping the walkway area looking great.

Cottage Garden

Weeding and pruning was done at the Saturday workday. Waiting for Becky Smith to give us a plan for the proposed fairy garden.

Earth Kind Rose Garden

Trisha Bradbury is the new chair. At the Saturday workday Trisha started mulching the rose beds. Trisha and committee members are up-to-date on the evaluations. Trisha trained several new people to help her with the evaluations.

Everyone's Garden (the E-Garden)

Mary & Don Parkhouse were here for the workday. Mulching and weeding was done. Mary and Kenny Fletcher have been hosting the twilight gardening.

Front Yard

Laurie Whittle has resigned as chair. We are in the process of looking for a new chair.

Herb Knot Garden

New herbs were put into the garden.

Japanese Garden

The painting on the bridge has been completed. Marlene and committee members still need to sand and weather treat the walkway on the bridge. New mulch was laid down in some areas. Jim Cowan has been working on broken sprinkler lines.

Native Garden/Rain Harvesting

Working on how much water needs to be applied to the garden in front of the range building. Also, working on new plant labeling and plant info to be available to the public.

Rose Garden

Faith and Becky have been doing a lot of work in the rose garden. The new plants have added a bit of color to the rose garden and the vines growing on the trellis are starting to really take off.

Vegetable Garden

- We are going to be meeting with Patty about several issues.

Vineyard

James Buckley will be the new chair for the vineyard. The grapes will need to be harvested real soon.

Water Garden

The water garden has had a total revamp. On July 24th Pond Pros came out and in one very hot day a team of workers including Glenn Dresner and Terry Williams pulled out all of the plants, power washed the pond, repotted plants, and cleaned the entire bog area. It looks so much cleaner and the fish are very happy. Justin from Pond Pros suggested a yearly cleaning. Also, Peg Turrentine cleaned up the canna lilies from the back of the pond.

Yardwise/Compost

A turnable composter has been installed and placed on cement blocks and secured. The area has been cleaned up and signs have been applied to the bins.

Outdoor Classroom/Gazebo

Beds, soil, sprinkler system, drain lines and plants have all been installed thanks to Glenn, Jim, Cliff, Jane and Cindy and many committee members. A beautiful birdbath from Enchanted Gardens was purchased and installed. After it cools off a little, the final steps will be to install a boarder around the flowerbeds and lay some stone for the walkway.

Miscellaneous/Discussion

- The August Saturday workday was visited by many in people from the public. There were about 20 people FBMG that came out and braved the heat. Lots of watermelon and water was handed out and enjoyed by all. A ton of work was done and the gardens are really looking great.
- Unfinished business #17 has been completed. The Storm Prep. List has been sent to Glenn, Nat, Margo, Shari, Jane and Cindy. Margo will keep a copy with the rest of the board folders and it will be labeled as Hurricane Preparedness List.
- James Buckley will be the new chair for the Vineyards and Trisha Bradbury agreed to be the new chair for the Earthkind Roses.
- On July 24th the pond had a thorough cleaning by Justin from Pond Pros. Thank you to the board for approving the request and also thank you to

Glenn Dresner and Terry Williams for helping with the cleaning. It looks crystal clear now.

- We will be trying a new soil distributor by the name of Landscape Central located on Westheimer Parkway. They will be charging us wholesale prices and only \$20.00 for delivery if we order 8 or more yards. Many chairs have not been happy with the soil that we have been getting from Living Earth.
- The deadline for FBMG to sign up for the Mary Palmer Dargan Landscape Design Training Class is August 15th. The class is scheduled for September 11 & 12 and we are waiting for the deadline to see how many FBMG have signed up. Then we can determine if we will need 1 or 2 speakers. Also, the hotel has been reserved for Mary.
- Thank you to Glenn, Cindy, Karen Arceneaux and several others for putting mulch around the new plants at the Outdoor Classroom during the Saturday workday.
- Native Garden request for additional money for plant labels and a clear box to hold fliers that will have a plant list with info. Some of the funds will also be used for new fall plants.

Submitted by Cindy Fairbanks & Jane Gray

August 2009 Member Relations Report

From: Marilyn Almon

Membership – 26 of 28 of the Fall 2008 graduates have become members of FBCMG. The web roster is continually updated and committee rosters are continually updated and routed to committee chairs as needed.

Bonsai Workshop – 15 master gardeners have registered for the hands-on workshop that will be held Saturday, August 15th, from 9 am to 1 pm in the annex conference room. Hurley Johnson from the Houston Bonsai Society will conduct the workshop and every participant will take home a plant in a ceramic container and detailed care instructions.

Field Trip to A&M gardens on Saturday, November 14th – Shari has obtained permission for FBCMG members to visit the Hensel gardens and the holistic garden on the campus. There will likely be a trip to Antique Rose Emporium in Brenham after lunch at Martha's Bloomers Cafe in Navasota.

FBCMG Fall Garden Tours – October 25th and November 1st are the targeted dates for this activity, to be conducted similarly to the Fall 2008 Informal Garden Tours. This year it will be limited to 2 Sundays only and about 4 gardens per week, depending on location. Requests for garden host volunteers will be issued soon. Should there be more gardens volunteered than can be accommodated, a selection process will be implemented based on criteria established in 2008.

Member Opinion Survey Results – Compiled and routed to Board members on August 11th, thus completing Item # 3 on the Unfinished Business List.

Painting Texas with Wildflowers Project – Sponsored by TMGA, this project currently involves Master Gardener associations in 31 counties who plant wildflowers in public areas of their counties. Permission would first have to be obtained from TXDOT if Board members are in favor of participating in this project. Free wildflower seed is available from the TX Dept. of Agriculture and scarified bluebonnet seed would have to be purchased. We would need to make seed balls to be distributed into the selected planting area in the fall. For more info, see:

<http://www.texasmastergardeners.com/index.html>
<http://www.vcmga.org/PaintingTexasWithWildflowers.html>

Submitted by Marilyn Almon
August 11, 2009

August 2009 Youth Activities Report

From: Ginny Grant

June 15-19, 2009 - JMG Day Camp – Earth-kind® Kids Kamp, Rosenberg

30 children attended; each earned a JMG Golden Ray Medal for completing a total of 14 activities or projects from the chapter on Ecology & Environmental Horticulture.

22 Master Gardeners, 4 4-H volunteers, and 1 MG spouse contributed 506 volunteer hours. This total does not include the valuable hours provided by Extension employees—Margo McDowell, CEA Shari Koch, CEA Shelley Pappas, and Cheryl Wasicek. Margo, Shari, and Shelley attended numerous meetings, providing guidance and information; Cheryl created the Kamp logo that appeared on our advertising, t-shirts, and the Kampers' Journals. She also assembled the journals and embossed the T-shirts that each Kamper and Master Gardener wore on the field trip to the Fort Bend Recycling Center.

Registration for each Kamper was \$50, for a total of \$1,500; expenses were \$1,165.28; net income \$334.72. Scarecrow supplies and booklet printing cost were donated Barbara & Bob McCormick; Bob also helped with the assembly activity and presented an educational program about the origin of Scarecrows.

July 15, 2009 – 4-H Day Camp, Rosenberg

66 children made Plant People; 6 Master Gardeners volunteered

July 21, 2009 – Missouri City Children's Summer Day Camp

35 children learned about origins of fruits and vegetables; made Paper Pots and planted Sunflower seeds

June 12 & August 4, 2009 – Briargate Elementary-FBISD, Houston

First JMG information meeting was with the school Principal and Shari Koch. Second meeting was with Shari, the school staff involved with Garden program and Extension agents Shelley Pappas and Tim Sandles. Additional meetings have been scheduled to discuss garden plans with garden facilitator and to discuss JMG classroom activities with Science teaching staff.

August 6, 2009 - Plants in the Classroom – Lamar CISD, Rosenberg

First program with LCISD. 12 teachers learned about vermiculture and composting; assembled a bin for their classroom.