



**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
June 13, 2007**

Attendees –

Board Members Present: James Buckley, Peg d’Hemecourt, Brenda Dresner, Glenn Dresner, Mike Greenwood, Nat Gruesen via phone, Mary Beth McCaughey, Carolyn McDaniel, and Marilyn Almon.

Board Members Absent: Sallie Bourgeois, Barbara Brannon, and Ginny Grant.

Cooperative Extension Staff Present: None

Cooperative Extension Staff Absent:

Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell
CEA-Horticulture – Mark Countryman

Quorum Present? Yes

Call to Order – Mary Beth McCaughey called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Approval of Minutes – After a motion by Brenda Dresner and a second by James Buckley, the amended minutes of the May 9, 2007, Board Meeting were unanimously approved.

Officer and Committee Reports:

President – Mary Beth McCaughey

- Mary Beth announced that the Fall ’06 class produced nine enthusiastic master gardener graduates. Graduation was held on June 7th in the TTVN room.
- Gail Blair will conduct the quarterly review of the FBCMG financial records. She declined Mary Beth’s request to handle publicity.
- In reference to members who have been ill or who have had accidents, Glenn Dresner questioned the feasibility of informing the general membership via APBees. He suggested that this would provide an outreach opportunity among members. Mary Beth will discuss the concept with Margo McDowell.

Vice President - Peg d’Hemecourt

- As a representative to TMGA, Peg informed the Board that the Harrison County Master Gardeners have presented a proposal to host the 2009 TMGA Conference, to be held April 23rd to 25th, in the Marshall, Texas area. Peg stated that an interesting presentation of activities was being offered and she requested feedback from Board members. Since no objections were voiced, Peg will vote in favor of the proposal by the June 15, 2007, deadline.

Secretary – Marilyn Almon

- No report.

Treasurer – Mike Greenwood

- Mike will meet with Gail Blair after the Board meeting to initiate the review of financial records for the period of January through May, 2007. Gail's report should be sent to Mary Beth, who will then route the report to Board members via email.
- The 2007 midyear budget review will focus on January through June expenditures.
- Mary Beth reiterated that the midyear budget review will be held in conjunction with the July 11th Board meeting. Any necessary adjustments to the budget will be considered at that time.
- Nat Gruesen requested the receipt of a Landscape Budget vs. Actual Expense Report prior to the July workday in order to review it with the garden chairs. Mike will send the report to Nat.

Awards – Carolyn McDaniel

- No report.

Communications – Open position

- Mary Beth stated that June 22nd is the deadline for submitting articles to The Grapevine.
- Robert Goehring will soon reveal the all new FBCMG website. It will feature a new calendar function and a search function. The FAQ section has been removed and will be revised. Some general articles have been eliminated from the site and others need to be reviewed.
- The website experienced a short period of inaccessibility because the hosting fee had not been paid. The new host will be 1and1.com and fees will be paid quarterly.
- Mary Beth asked Nat if any of the garden committees would be interested in posting information about garden activities on the website.
- The calendar function should be an asset for the Hotline.
- Mary Beth has provided the Hotline with the June, July, and August press releases.

Community Relations – Brenda Dresner

- Brenda reported that there was a recent article in the Fort Bend Herald about the Ghetto Gardeners at Seguin Elementary School. This is a JMG program initiated by Ginny Grant. The article contained nice color pictures and good publicity for FBCMG.
- Brenda has scheduled monthly program speakers through September. She has asked Nat to present a program on rain water harvesting in October or November. Many members have requested that John Ferguson be scheduled again and he has agreed to return.
- The January and February monthly program topics will relate to the fruit tree sale and perennial sale respectively. Peg suggested a slant toward Texas natives and the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) if a lot of native plants will be included in sale inventory.
- A program on succulents was suggested. Mary Beth recommended asking Chris LaChance to speak about WaterSmart.

Fundraising – Barbara Brannon

- Barbara was not present.

Greenhouse – Glenn Dresner and James Buckley, co-chairs

- Glenn's report is attached to the minutes.
- Two different systems have been established in the misting tent for seeds and cuttings.
- Mary Beth proposed asking Ginny if she needs to have any plants propagated for the butterfly exhibit in the AgTivity Barn.

Landscape – Nat Gruesen – via phone

- Nat reported that 42 master gardeners attended the June garden workday, representing a steady increase in attendance numbers.
- After work in the gardens concluded, Nat presented an advanced training class on constructing rain barrels for 15 members. He expressed his appreciation to Glenn and to Cliff Bergman for their help in securing materials for the workshop.
- Nat commented that there are currently no major projects occurring in the gardens and activity mainly consists of installing new plant material and ongoing maintenance.
- The Butterfly Garden still needs an official chairperson. Mary Beth will send contact information to Nat on Denise Riccobono, who has shown an interest in chairing the garden committee.
- Laurie Whittle, currently an associate master gardener, will co-chair the Front Yard Garden while Nat will be the acting chair until Laurie graduates. The Board approved the arrangement.
- Peg offered to help with the planting and routine maintenance of the Water Garden unless someone else is willing to assume the chair position.
- Carolyn expressed an interest in the Vineyard chair position and has tried to contact Pete Pavlovsky, former chairperson. She will contact Margo to obtain the details about the chairperson responsibilities. James suggested that Doug Staff would be a good resource to contact.
- Carol Blanton, a recent Fall '06 graduate, will chair the Herbal Knot Garden.
- Nat would like to purchase misting fans to be used as cooling stations in the gardens.
- The Native Garden will incorporate rain water harvesting into its plan. Vince Mannino, FBC Extension Director, has been very supportive of the project and has requested plans from Nat in order to obtain approval from Mr. Brady. Extension approval will be required since the flow of rain water will deviate from the current pattern.
- The Native Garden will be annexing the beds in front of the Range and constructing new beds in the grassy area adjacent to Vince's office. Nat made a motion, seconded by Brenda, and unanimously approved, to increase the Native Garden budget by \$300 for bed rejuvenation and new plant material.
- Nat commented that it was time to begin fall plant starts.
- Valerie Mazzagatti and Diana Montiso will become Yardwise co-chairs. Yardwise compost is now available for use in the gardens.
- Mary Beth asked Nat if the Vegetable Garden was planning to expand its area. Nat replied that he had been unable to reach Susan Brodmerkel, garden chair, but he does not think that an expansion is planned.

- Mary Beth stated that the future Rose Brigade Garden will occupy the space between the Vegetable Garden and the greenhouse. A&M will select the rose test varieties to be planted.
- Peg reported that there is a quest to have every Texas master gardener county implement EarthKind™ principles in a Rose Brigade demonstration garden.
- Mary Beth will prepare a cost estimate for expanded shale and high quality compost needed for the Rose Brigade Garden.
- Nat interjected that there is a 5 year plan for incorporating rain water harvesting in master gardener demonstration gardens. FBCMG will initiate the plan in the Native Garden.
- Mary Beth announced that the name of the Front Yard Garden will be changed to WaterSmart Garden.
- Nat commented on the need for a mentoring program, similar to Big Brothers, Big Sisters, to add a sense of belonging, commitment, and community to those new to FBCMG. He will work with Margo to compose a mission statement. Mary Beth stated that it is hoped that the concept can be implemented with the Fall '07 class. Peg offered her assistance and said that she has sent information to Margo on the mentoring program used in Galveston County.
- Nat stated that he has discussed with Margo and is exploring the creation of patches that can be earned to acknowledge members' accomplishments in various garden activities. Mary Beth suggested that a pin may be easier to use as opposed to sewing on patches, and Peg proposed designing something that would attach to the nametags, which everyone is supposed to wear for all master gardener activities. Glenn added that pins are more visible on hats than on shirts worn for workdays.
- Mary Beth mentioned that 40% of the awards earned last year have not been picked up from Margo's office. Marilyn posed the possibility of mailing the awards, excluding the heavy car magnets, to eliminate the storage issue and conclude the distribution.

Member Relations – Sallie Bourgeois

- Sallie was not present.
- Sallie will change the members only password and will email the new password to certified members prior to the June 18th effective date.
- Marilyn will contact Sallie about updating the 2007 membership list.

Youth Activities – Ginny Grant

- Ginny's report is attached to the minutes.
- The AgTivity Barn project begins on September 28th.
- Mary Beth announced that the 4-H day camp opens on July 19th and Ginny is in need of both volunteers and houseplants.

Cooperative Extension Advisor Reports:

CEA-Horticulture – Mark Countryman

- Mark was not present.

FBCMG Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell

- Margo was not present.

- **Standing Committee Reports:**

Governance Committee

- The committee recommended new verbiage to address the handling of memorial contributions. Modifications were suggested by Board members and the committee will present a revised proposal for approval at the July Board meeting.

Other

- No progress has been made thus far on planning the In the Garden Seminar.
- Mary Beth made a motion, seconded by Brenda, and approved unanimously, to contribute \$100 in memory of Marge Powers. Mary Beth will contact Gene Powers to confirm his preferred recipient organization. Mike will issue the check and Mary Beth will send a personal note with the donation.
- The By-laws and Operations Manual, as well as the Board meeting minutes, will be moved from the members only section to the public access section of the website.
- The question was posed about members certifying after a one year or more absence from active participation. Margo determines a member's standing in the organization.
- One or two people attended the first Saturday with the Master Gardeners on June 2nd.
- The Green Thumb Seminars will not incur a rental fee for use of Sienna Plantation facilities when the series begins there in the fall. Program topics have been reorganized and a brochure will be created, providing one or two sentences describing each program. The seminars will be publicized by the Sienna Property Managers in their newsletters.
- Glenn announced that he has installed an air pump for tire inflation.
- There was some discussion about the orange signs posted in the gardens pertaining to the harvesting of produce. Board members generally agreed that the signs could be less harshly worded to achieve the desired effect.

Old Business:

Gazebo

- Mary Beth is hoping to have pricing information available for the midyear budget review.
- The Victoria County Master Gardeners purchased their gazebo from Golden Rule Gazebo Company, a Mennonite group located in Texas.
- Glenn explained that paths would have to be located to avoid interfering with drainage and would also have to comply with ADA standards.
- Mary Beth suggested the possibility of elevating the structure.
- Peg inquired about the seating and standing capacity of the gazebo. Mary Beth responded that there would be some seating, with space allowed for tables or benches as needed.
- Glenn suggested that a free concert could be held in the gardens to publicize the grounds.

New Business:

- None

After a motion by Peg, seconded by Brenda, and approved by all, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 11, 2007, at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Almon
Secretary, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
7/08/2007

Greenhouse Report for May-June 2007

- The new shade cloth was installed on the Greenhouse. The cloth is 33 ft.-8 in. by 60 ft. and is an 80% shade. It is darker in the Greenhouse compared to the original cloth but will hopefully be cooler during the hot temperatures of the summer.
- New shade cloths were also installed on the shade room. One cloth was 20 ft. by 30 ft. with a 63% shade. A second cloth was installed that was 20 ft. by 35 ft. and is a 30% shade. The two different shade percentages are used to better acclimate plants taken from the greenhouse environment and transitioned before making them ready for transplanting in the various gardens.
- We have requested that Nat Gruesen contact the various gardens Chairpersons to determine what specific plants they may want to put in their various areas for the Fall. We would like to encourage the Chairpersons to come and plant their seeds in the Greenhouse in preparation for the upcoming Fall season. If they are not able to plant their own seeds, we will get volunteers working in the greenhouse to assist with the planting.
- We are making plans to construct shelving in the shade room that will be used for storage of the various pots used in the greenhouse.

Submitted by Glenn Dresner
6/11/07

JMG ACTIVITIES – June 10, 2007

Ginny Grant

JMG School Garden Meeting – May 23, 2007

Hutchison Elementary - Prepared garden design and discussed native plants for the garden. Committee had to present design and plant selection to LCISD Facilities personnel for approval. Committee will begin working on the actual layout construction during the summer and start planting after school starts. Teachers have requested a JMG presentation and orientation program after school starts.

JMG School Garden – Seguin Elementary – May 24, 2007

Denise Adams, Fort Bend Herald, photographs and article appeared in the paper.

Plants in the Classroom Meeting – May 29, 2007

Discussed arrangements for upcoming FBISD Train the Trainer sessions scheduled for June 20th and August 21st. The June 20th session topics are the Nitrogen, Carbon & Water Cycles; Vermiculture and an overview of Insects; the activities will be constructing classroom worm bins and compost in a bottle. Approximately 20 teachers are scheduled to attend. The session in August will include Soil Science, Botany and Insects; the activities haven't been selected.

JMG Activity – June 4, 2007

Cottonwood Creek 4H Club in Beasley
Robin Vrana, Club Leader - 17 children and about 10 parents created "Plant People" after a short introduction to JMG.

Ag'Tivity Barn Meeting (Fair Group) – June 18, 2007 (Fair opens September 28th)

Discuss displays, school days and parade. Master Gardener area will include horticulture, butterflies and the Aquaculture display this year.

JMG Orientation – June 27, 2007

Spring '07 Class will attend JMG orientation and complete several JMG activities.

4-H Day Camp – July 19, 2007

JMG Activity will be "Plant People," approximately 125 children are expected to attend. Master Gardeners will also be helping with the Community Service project—the attendees will plant small houseplants to be given to residents of nursing homes in their areas.

Entomology Group/JMG Activity – June 28, 2007

Approximately 60 children from Rosenberg's summer camp will visit Demonstration Gardens and participate in several activities.