



**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
November 14, 2007**

**Attendees –**

*Board Members Present:* James Buckley, Brenda Dresner, Glenn Dresner, Ginny Grant, Mike Greenwood, Nat Gruesen, Mary Beth McCaughey, Carolyn McDaniel, Marilyn Almon, and via phone, Nat Gruesen.

*Board Members Absent:* Sallie Bourgeois, Barbara Brannon, and Peg d'Hemecourt.

*Cooperative Extension Staff Present:*

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 9:30 a.m.

**Officer and Committee Reports:**

President – Mary Beth McCaughey

- Mary Beth thanked master gardeners for helping with the November 9<sup>th</sup> FBISD in-service training.

Vice President - Peg d'Hemecourt

- Peg was not present.

Secretary – Marilyn Almon

- No report.

Treasurer – Mike Greenwood

- Mike read a letter from the Fort Bend Seniors group requesting a donation from FBCMG. Board members agreed that donations by FBCMG should be representative or supportive of gardening projects rather than non-gardening projects and organizations.
- Mark questioned the \$3000 expenditure for rain water harvesting on the October financial statement and Mary Beth explained that the expense was for purchase of a windmill.

Awards – Carolyn McDaniel

- Carolyn's report is attached to the minutes.

#### Communications – Open position

- Mary Beth reported that The Grapevine served as the official notice to the membership of the 2008 slate of candidates.
- Brenda made a motion, seconded by Glenn and approved by all, to increase the advertising budget by \$60.
- Mary Beth remarked that the two ads placed in the Fort Bend Herald to advertise master gardener classes had paid off this year for FBCMG.
- Mark asked whether a master gardener would be willing to contribute articles to the Gulf Coast Tribune on a regular basis. Mary Beth suggested that those who write for The Grapevine may possibly be interested in this project.

#### Community Relations – Brenda Dresner

- Brenda announced that Hurley Johnson, assisted by another member of the Bonsai Society, would present a lecture and hands-on demonstration on bonsai basics at the November monthly meeting.

#### Fundraising – Barbara Brannon

- Barbara was not present.

#### Greenhouse – Glenn Dresner and James Buckley, co-chairs

- Glenn's report is attached to the minutes.
- Glenn and James commented that they had learned, from attending the greenhouse specialist training, the importance of knowing the analysis and pH of water used in the greenhouse.

#### Youth Activities – Ginny Grant

- Ginny's report is attached to the minutes.
- Ginny has purchased a JMG curriculum manual for Shelly Pappas, 4-H advisor.
- Ginny is talking to people at Mary Austin Holley School about establishing a JMG program there.

#### Member Relations – Sallie Bourgeois

- Sallie was not present.
- Mary Beth noted that it will be time to begin membership renewal appeals in December and she will contact Sallie about doing so.
- Glenn questioned whether it would be appropriate to include questions about special interests and skills on membership forms.

#### Landscape – Nat Gruesen, via phone

- The Native Garden now owns a 33 foot tall windmill. Nat has submitted location plans to Mark, Vince Mannino, and Don Brady, with the preferred location being north of the Circle Gardens.
- Patti Stemmer will chair the Vegetable Garden.
- Chairs are still needed for Front Yard, Japanese, and Rose Gardens.
- A support crew is still needed for water, tea, and hospitality on workdays.
- Nat questioned the feasibility of holding a composting class in the Yardwise area. Mary Beth responded that it would be possible at night if lighting is adequate. Nat commented that holding the class on the FBCMG grounds would promote the organization.

- Mary Beth questioned whether advanced training in 2008 would be open to the public. Margo responded that the Bud O'Shieles Community Center could be a possible location if warranted.
- Johnny Williams and fellow Orchid Society members will present the December 1st advanced training on growing orchids.
- Glenn commented that chairs should cash their outstanding checks and Mary Beth noted that all expense reimbursement requests should be turned in by December 15th to allow adequate time for closing out 2007 financial records.

**Approval of the Minutes** – After a motion by Ginny and a second by James, the minutes of the October 10, 2007, Board meeting, as revised on November 13, 2007, were approved by all.

### **Standing Committee Reports:**

#### Governance Committee

- There was no committee activity in October, but Brenda is working on speakers bureau guidelines.
- Mary Beth noted that the Bylaws do not allow for election by acclamation and that Article 9 dealing with elections may need to be amended. She suggested keeping a list of proposed changes to the Bylaws and voting on the list of changes as opposed to voting on one change at a time since a vote of the general membership is required.

#### Nominating Committee

- The committee consisting of Ginny, Jodie Douglass, and Doris Spiegel will propose the following slate of candidates for 2008 at the November 15th election of officers:  
 President: Nat Gruesen  
 Vice President: Barbara McCormick  
 Secretary: Marilyn Almon  
 Treasurer: Mike Greenwood

### **Old Business:**

#### Mentoring Program

- Margo commented that the program is currently on hold, but will move forward and be of great value in the near future.

#### Educational Assistance

- Mary Beth asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to develop ideas and formulate guidelines. She will contact Peg d'Hemecourt about participating on the committee.

### **New Business:**

#### Election Committee

- An election committee consisting of Ginny, Jodie, and Terry Douglass was appointed by Mary Beth to conduct the November election of officers.

#### Urban Harvest Request to Borrow Wagons

- Board members were in agreement to loan wagons to Urban Harvest for their fruit tree sale.

#### Memorial Contribution

- Marilyn made a motion, seconded by Glenn and approved by all, to contribute \$100 in memory of Marcia Roenigk to Creekside Fellowship to be used for the prayer garden.
- A motion was made by Marilyn, seconded by Brenda and approved by all, to increase the budget for memorial contributions by \$100 to cover the donation.

#### **Cooperative Extension Advisor Reports:**

##### FBCMG Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell

- Margo asked if Board members had received comments about the new eight hour requirement implemented in 2007 which required volunteer hours in the Hotline, gardens, or greenhouse, or a combination of the three. Margo had not received any complaints about the change in total hours required.
- Several suggestions were offered to satisfy the eight hour requirement and all agreed that it would not be advisable to lower the requirement.
- Margo suggested perhaps declaring Wednesdays as an official workday since many gardeners are present then.

##### CEA-Horticulture – Mark Countryman

- Mark stated his numerous disagreements with the manner in which the Board conducts the business of the organization. Mary Beth responded that the Board is in complete compliance with master gardener guidelines, aware of its role in Fort Bend County, and that the objective is to be a collaborative organization.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

The date and time of the next Board meeting will be determined at a later time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Almon  
Secretary, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.  
01/06/2008

## AWARDS MEETING

A meeting for the awards dinner was held on October 24, 2007. Next meeting November 15 at 5:30 pm.

BANQUET-Theme: Holiday

Decorations: Ginny & others-force amaryllis; plants from greenhouse  
3 & 5 year giveaways-pins & carnations, white for 3 and red for 5 years

Carnations- Marsha & Brenda

AWARDS-patches, shirts & pins

NAME TAGS & TICKETS-Mac

PAPER GOODS-Marsha Sacks

ICE BREAKER-Cindy Fairbanks & Jane Gray

DOOR PRIZES-tickets given at door-DOOR GREETER-Jane Gray & Betty

SPEAKER-Kenny Fletcher

SETUP & TAKE DOWN-probationers

TABLECLOTHS-Mary Beth & Lillian Tigard

### FOOD

Meat-Doziers-Marilyn

A-H Salads

I-P Veggies

Q-Z Desserts

All are to bring recipes

PROGRAM-Marilyn & Sally with others-use old format

Greenhouse plants-Mac & Cindy

Tickets along with lanyards, pins & flowers given out at the door at checkin-Betty & Jane

Patches-100+ hours

Pins- 3 and 5 year

Lanyards-36-99 hours

PARTY TO START AT 6:30 WITH ICE BREAKER TO BE TURNED IN AT BEGINNING OF DINNER LINE

7:00 Welcome-Mac, Mary Beth & Prayer-Barbara McCormick

DINNER

INTRODUCTION OF 2007 BOARD

AWARDS

MG SPECIALISTS

## Monthly Greenhouse Report-October & November 2007

- James and I attended Greenhouse Management Specialist Training at the Tarrant County Extension Service. This was the first training done for Greenhouse Specialist. The training was conducted from October 24-26, 2007. The host for the training was Tarrant County Horticulturist Steve Chaney with Dr. Dan Wilkerson of Texas A&M as the instructor. Dr. Wilkerson had extensive knowledge of commercial greenhouse operations. Much of his information dealt with practices and information that gardeners could use regardless of whether they had a greenhouse or not.
- One key point that came out of the overall training program was that we as Master Gardeners are doing a lot of the correct things in the construction and operation of our greenhouse facility.
- James and I plan to review the information and notes that were taken in the class and develop a mini-orientation program and instruction for not only Associate Master Gardeners but also for any Master Gardeners that have an interest in learning more about greenhouses.
- We will be using the information we received for future articles for the Grapevine.
- As part of this specialist training we toured a private wholesale nursery as well as the city owned Botanical Gardens of Ft. Worth.
- There are several of the FBMG garden chairpersons utilizing their greenhouse facilities to start new plants for their areas of responsibilities.
- We have started hibiscus cuttings for the Spring Master Gardener training on propagation.

Submitted by Glenn Dresner, 11/10/2007

**JMG ACTIVITIES – November 12, 2007**  
**Ginny Grant**

JMG Activity – Texian Market Day at George Ranch – October 26, 2007

As one of the exhibits in the Fort Bend Moo-seum Barn, 9 Master Gardeners gave out fall vegetable seeds with planting instructions to 92 children and 77 adults.

Plants in the Classroom – November 9, 2007

In-service training session for FBISD elementary science teachers. PIC2 topics were Insects and Pollinators. There were 5 hands-on activities for the teachers to make and take back to school. Jane Grey (Associate, Fall 07) prepared the TEKS correlations for the teachers, Don Johnson prepared a presentation on Insects, and Pam Tatge created the presentation and instructional materials for Pollinators; FBISD copied the presentations onto CDs for each teacher. Twenty-three teachers representing grades K-3 attended. Eight Master Gardeners participated

JMG Orientation for Master Gardener Class-Fall '07 – November 28, 2007

Activities will be determined.

JMG Activity – First Baptist Church in Katy – January 18, 2008

Gardening with Children presentation for Mothers of Pre-Schoolers

Plants in the Classroom – February 29, 2008

Topics will be determined after Don Johnson and Terry Harris meet with Science Curriculum Coordinator.

JMG Activity – Fort Bend Museum Children's Day – March 29, 2008

Activity will be creating pots from newspaper and planting seeds.

**FBCMG New Business - Agenda Item for November 14:**

Memorial Contribution – Marcia Roenigk

I would like to propose that the Board consider making a contribution in memory of Marcia Roenigk in the amount of \$100. The Vintage Rosery has been a supporter of FBCMG for some time.

Marcia's husband Bob has requested that contributions in Marcia's memory be made to Creekside Christian Fellowship for their prayer garden.

Creekside Christian Fellowship  
P.O. Box 1129  
Needville, Texas 77461

-Marilyn

**FBMG – “Master Gardener Place”: Gazebo Structure  
As of October 25, 2007**

**Background:**

The idea started as a plan for an outdoor structure in the Demonstration Gardens that could be used for education and outreach activities. After considering possibilities we determined that a general structure could be used for our specific FBMG purposes and it would be a feature to enhance the gardens overall – an additional benefit as we publicize and invite the public to the gardens more. Based on this broader approach, and to avoid confusion about whether the structure would be a classroom with fixed walls, we began calling this project the “Master Gardener Place.”

A site in the open area framed by the Greenhouse, Water Garden and Japanese Garden has been identified as the preferred location for this project. Based on an estimate that a formal class or activity in the MG Place might involve approximately 20-24 people, we estimated that a structure anywhere from 16’x 24’ up to 20’x 30’ would be appropriate.

Based on research into outdoor structures, we came to the conclusion that a gazebo structure would serve our purposes well. We have found that several vendors offer gazebos that are partially assembled and then shipped to a site where the assembly is erected and completed.

Ginny Grant, Glenn Dresner, Margo McDowell and Mary Beth McCaughey have visited several sites to see gazebos constructed in this fashion and we have spoken to several vendors by phone. We have also been in touch with the Victoria County Master Gardeners who worked with the Golden Rule Gazebo Company in Lott, TX on a similar project in 2006.

**Gazebos:**

Earlier this year we researched pre-assembled gazebo offerings from HomePlace Structures ([www.homeplacestructures.com](http://www.homeplacestructures.com)) and visited one of their installations locally. We came to understand that HomePlace is a national distributor that works with Amish and Mennonite craftsman mostly in the Northeast United States and that their products are shipped across the US. We visited The Church at Bethel’s Family in Houston and were impressed with their large installation of HomePlace products (two gazebos as well as numerous outdoor play structures).

We also visited Vintage Rosery and talked with Marcia and Bob Roenigk about the gazebo on their property. Bob explained that he had worked with a similar sort of distributor arrangement when they decided to add the gazebo. He and Marcia both spoke highly of the product and their dealings with the company. Bob’s perspective is that the craftsman all offer similar designs which makes the gazebos somewhat consistent regardless of what channel is used for sales and distribution.

While the HomePlace Structures offerings looked to be well made, we grew concerned that shipping charges might be significant, prompting us to look for a more local arrangement. We followed up on a contact with the Victoria County Master Gardeners. They had installed a gazebo during an expansion of their gardens and they spoke highly of the Golden Rule Gazebo Company, a family owned business in Lott, TX ([www.goldenrulegazebo.com](http://www.goldenrulegazebo.com)). We’ve spoken by phone with their owner and discussed materials (wood vs. vinyl), installation strategies, specifics of liability policies (required for any vendor who works on FB County property), etc. Glenn has also visited their business in Lott. Our impression is that Golden Rule Gazebo produces high quality products and that they would be willing to work with us on a specific configuration (they have also indicated a willingness to procure a liability bond in order to work with us on installation).

**Project Specifics:**

We have discussed the possibility of purchasing an oval shaped gazebo with two entrances and permanent benches lining the inside. After speaking to the folks at Golden Rule Gazebo, it sounds as if we could install the gazebo on raised blocks, which would avoid concerns about drainage across the area.

A specific gazebo configuration will need to determine the following:

Size – We originally thought that 20'x 30' would be a good size but then wondered how often we would utilize all of the space. Most recently we've been considering a 16'x 24' size.

Material – We are concerned about the maintenance required on a wooden gazebo and would prefer a vinyl product (though vinyl will require occasional power-washing).

Options – The standard configurations allow for a single or double roof, choices of styles on spindles, braces, etc. These will also be determined once we have chosen a size. We want to make sure the gazebo has electricity for a ceiling fan (or two depending on size) and electrical outlets. We will also want a spigot very near the gazebo to facilitate cleanup after classes or activities.

Design for gazebo base: Glenn and Jim Cowan conducted a size survey and have mapped out the elevation across the proposed installation area. We must be mindful of drainage concerns.

Design and material for paths and steps: The entrance to the gazebo will be raised slightly so we must design a ramp and steps to allow access. Our thinking so far is that the main entrance will face the stone path that leads to the greenhouse – this area is relatively flat and we could build a ramp that would be easy for all to use and which would allow wheelchair access. We also envision a second entrance accessed via a pathway between the Water Garden and the Japanese Garden. There is a noticeable slope in this area and we would need a few steps up to the gazebo.

Approvals and permits: Vince Mannino has indicated he would welcome the addition of a gazebo to the Demonstration Gardens.

We must also get approval from Don Brady, Facilities Management & Planning Department Director for Fort Bend County. In a discussion with Don about this project on 10/25, Mary Beth learned that Don was favorable to the idea of the gazebo project and he raised the following points:

- Any vendor working on the grounds must have liability insurance. We will follow up to determine what specific coverage is required.
- When the subject of access came up and the intent to design pathways to ADA requirements, Don questioned whether we would need a building permit (and an accompanying ADA review). He was unsure whether this project would qualify as a "building" and indicated that he would help us check into the requirements. Mary Beth will be following up with Don to get more specifics. If a building permit is required, we may need full architectural diagrams of the complete installation.

**Financial aspects:**

In the budget for 2007, the Board allocated \$24,500 as a Capital Budget item based on an initial estimate for the cost of a gazebo structure. A complete plan and cost estimate will be compiled in preparation for the 2008 budget analysis.

**Guidelines for Use:**

Our objectives for adding “the Master Gardener Place” to the grounds include the following specific to Fort Bend County Master Gardener activities:

- Providing a covered location outdoors with seating for demonstrations, classes and seminars hosted by Fort Bend Master Gardeners, Inc. Participants will include Master Gardener members and associates as well as county residents notified of the opportunity by publicity and website postings.
- Providing a covered location outdoors with seating for Fort Bend Master Gardener committee meetings and similar activities.
  
- ❖ Our intent is that Fort Bend Master Gardener activities will be given priority for use of the gazebo and that no other group or individuals will be allowed to schedule use of the gazebo without FBMG permission.

We hope that “the Master Gardener Place” will also:

- Function as an additional feature providing a covered seating area for guests visiting the gardens and for employees of TCE who often take breaks in the gardens.
- In the future, we may find opportunities to host non-horticulture related events at the gazebo in order to promote the gardens. For example, hosting a small musical group to provide a short program.

There has been discussion that we do NOT want “the Master Gardener Place” used for weddings or social events not hosted by the Fort Bend Master Gardeners.

Additional work will be needed to finalize more specific guidelines for use.

-Submitted by Mary Beth McCaughey