



**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
October 10, 2007**

Attendees –

Board Members Present: Barbara Brannon, James Buckley, Peg d'Hemecourt, Nat Gruesen, Mary Beth McCaughey, Carolyn McDaniel, Marilyn Almon, and via phone, Ginny Grant.

Board Members Absent: Sallie Bourgeois, Brenda Dresner, Glenn Dresner, and Mike Greenwood.

Cooperative Extension Staff Present: Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell.

Cooperative Extension Staff Absent: CEA, Horticulture – Mark Countryman

Quorum Present? Yes

Call to Order – Mary Beth McCaughey called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – After a motion by James Buckley and a second by Nat Gruesen, the minutes of the September 12, 2007, Board Meeting were unanimously approved.

Officer and Committee Reports:

President – Mary Beth McCaughey

- Mary Beth thanked members for working in the Ag'Tivity Barn at the Fort Bend County Fair.
- Margo presented the following report of Ag'Tivity Barn activities:
 - 12 master gardeners per shift worked on the four school days.
 - Ag'Tivity Barn planning for 2008 will begin in March or April.
 - The theme will be changed due to the fact that the same schools and people are attending each year. One intent is to highlight recycling.
 - General attendance was up and the number of school days will increase to five next year.
 - The butterflies need to be located in an area where they will receive more sun. Fifteen chrysalises were rescued from the exhibit and relocated.
 - Margo would like someone to write up a perspective on the fair for The Grapevine.

- Mary Beth reported that she has been in contact with LaJoyce at Stafford TV regarding the taping of three-minute spots about FBCMG. Mary Beth asked Board members for topic ideas, such as preparing for upcoming seasons, greenhouse activities, and an overview of the master gardener program. The program is seen only in Stafford and FBCMG will be able to obtain a copy of the tapes.
- Mary Beth reminded Board members to begin planning for next year's budget.

Vice President - Peg d'Hemecourt

- No report.

Secretary – Marilyn Almon

- No report.

Treasurer – Mike Greenwood

- Mike was not present.

Awards – Carolyn McDaniel

- Carolyn announced that the next planning meeting for the awards banquet will be held on October 25th at 4 p.m. Small giveaways will be replaced by a few nice door prizes purchased from merchants who support FBCMG. Old master gardener cookbooks will be available to members who may want to take one.
- Margo commented that there are kalanchoes of various colors that can be used for the awards banquet and for Spring 2007 graduation décor.
- Mary Beth reminded Board members to turn in hours early in preparation for the awards banquet.

Communications – Open position

- Mary Beth reported that October 26th is the deadline for submitting Grapevine articles.
- Mary Ellen Twiss continues to cover all of the publicity outlets.
- Margo questioned the timing of press releases for the Fruit Tree Sale and Mary Beth replied that information is needed now for the quarterly publications. Email addresses were obtained from door prize entries at the last sale.

Community Relations – Brenda Dresner

- Brenda was not present.

Fundraising – Barbara Brannon

- Barbara commented that the Fruit Tree Sale was approaching quickly.
- Margo stated that she had been contacted by David Shackelford of Brazos Citrus Tree Farm who would like to become a stock source for FBCMG. Harris County and Montgomery County master gardeners currently obtain stock from his company for their sales. Mary Beth noted that Treeseach Farms will not provide stock on consignment if other vendors participate in the same sale.
- Peg suggested that an evaluation process is needed to determine how to select vendors from a business decision perspective. Barbara suggested forming an exploratory committee after the 2008 sale to handle the matter.
- Nat stated that since the buildings are already reserved for the sale, he would like to see gardening seminars held during the sale.

- Mary Beth asked how the Entomology Group was progressing on producing handbooks and commented that the information could perhaps be more usable in a website format. Margo replied that the Galveston County Master Gardeners' website contains fabulous entomology information and perhaps Robert Goehring could organize a sample of the FBCMG information and present it to members of the Entomology Group for their approval as a website resource. Peg interjected that posting to the website could impact the public and perhaps the group could consider later selling their handbooks to the public when they have produced a sufficient number of them. The Entomology Group receives funding from FBCMG and currently does not need to raise money for funding.

Greenhouse – Glenn Dresner and James Buckley, co-chairs

- James' report is attached to the minutes.
- Mary Beth again suggested using some of the plants in the Greenhouse as door prizes.

Landscape – Nat Gruesen

- The Japanese Garden, Vegetable Garden, and Front Yard need committee chairs. Laurie Whittle will be unable to chair the Front Yard Garden. Nat suggested recruiting through the APBees and Margo suggested making a pitch at the next monthly meeting.
- Nat reported observing camaraderie among the garden groups.
- Robert Goehring has mentioned to Mary Beth that the gardens could have a page on the website describing upcoming activities and where help is most needed.
- Nat is following up on workday attendance numbers and reiterated the need to seriously recruit garden chairs. A designated support group is needed for serving tea to the workers and possibly master gardeners who are unable to physically work in the gardens could supply that need.
- Nat stated that he was pleased to observe workers in Yardwise and the Veggie Garden cooperating. Compost from Yardwise is being used in the Veggie Garden.
- Fire ants continue to be a problem.
- The Native Garden is expanding its boundary.
- Rain Water Harvesting plans for the open area are being developed. Nat has a five year plan in mind for hosting the rain water harvesting specialist training here.
- Irrigation has been problematic and needs to be addressed. Water was turned off during the FBC Fair. Nat suggested budgeting for a licensed irrigation evaluation in 2008.
- Nat requested ideas for the November workday advanced training. He also inquired about using the TTVN room for advanced training since the annex conference room is very crowded.
- Mary Beth stated that a seminar on irrigation is needed.
- Nat will provide subject-related door prizes for his rain water harvesting presentation at the October monthly meeting.
- Nat would like to utilize Yardwise to interest citizens in FBCMG.
- Mary Beth circulated signage suggestions for the demonstration gardens. She will talk to Don Brady who is responsible for overseeing all county grounds.
- Ginny again opined that produce should be donated to the food bank rather than being utilized by FBCMG members. Mary Beth again stated that the seniors groups would also enjoy the produce.

- Peg commented that information obtained in the demonstration gardens is not being relayed to Fort Bend County citizens, such as what is growing, what works, and any recommendations that could be made. Mary Beth responded that there is a need to find people to write about the gardens. Nat stated that he is meeting with the committee chairs in November and that addressing this concern will be a goal for 2008.
- Peg offered to ghost write reports in 2008 using the information logged into the individual garden journals.
- Margo commented that a new scale is needed for weighing produce - possibly one that could be moved into the gardens for use.

Member Relations – Sallie Bourgeois

- Sallie was not present.

Youth Activities – Ginny Grant via phone

- Ginny's report is attached to the minutes.

Standing Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee

- Ginny reported that nominees had been obtained for all of the executive positions except for the presidency. The committee is still working to fill the position.

Governance Committee

- No activity.

Cooperative Extension Advisor Reports:

CEA-Horticulture – Mark Countryman

- Mark was not present.

FBCMG Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell

- Margo relayed her concern about aging master gardeners who are unable to handle the sun or work in the gardens. Carol Freeman and others are working on ideas for how this group could meet the garden hours requirement in lieu of working in the gardens. Suggested ideas so far are acting as roving reporters and photographing activities.
- Spring 2007 graduation will be held on October 30th.

Old Business:

Mentoring Program

- No report.

Gazebo

- Margo suggested initiating a conversation with Don Brady to obtain preliminary information that would be reported back to the Board. Factors such as pathway location, landscaping, usage predictions, and other parameters will have to be evaluated regarding the approximately 18' by 24' structure.

New Business:Educational Assistance Options

- Mary Beth highlighted the following points from the previous scholarship meeting:
 - Board members did not favor offering scholarships to high school seniors.
 - Money could be donated to “Scholarships without Tears,” an offering of TAMU and Stephen F. Austin University whereby these schools handle their own selection process. Investigating whether Prairie View A&M has a similar program was also discussed.
 - Money could be donated to Junior Master Gardeners or school gardens.
 - Extension has a goal to add 20 new school gardens (via JMG) per year through 2011. FBCMG could consider matching grants or donating seed money for registered groups. FBCMG could consider purchasing teachers’ guides which average about \$35 to \$40 each.
 - The Board is more comfortable offering educational financial assistance versus offering scholarships.
- Peg commented that the Board will have to determine how to define the magnitude of the amount to be budgeted each year.
- James stated that providing funds for school gardens could impact more people than a scholarship to an individual could.
- Mary Beth announced that this topic would become an action item for the next Board meeting. A committee of interested individuals will be formed to explore options.

By acclaim, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Almon
Secretary, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
11/12/2007

2007 October Greenhouse Report

Submitted by James Buckley

The following items are representative of the activity in the Greenhouse for September:

1. Twilight Gardening - The greenhouse was open on Sept. 19th and approximately 9 people worked during the 2 hour time. Many were members of the fall 07 class who are required to complete 4 hours in the greenhouse.
2. Citrus - Most of the citrus plants previously growing in the greenhouse have been moved to the shade room for outside acclimation.
3. Fort Bend County Fair- In order to support the Ag-tivity Barn during the county fair, the greenhouse provided milk weed plants for the butterfly population on display. These milk weed plants had be grown from seed in the greenhouse.
4. Garden Use – Space has been allotted to Becky Leugemors of the Circle Garden and Becky Smith of the Cottage Garden to propagate new plants for their gardens.
5. Idea for Next Master Gardener class – In order to encourage increased use of the greenhouse and to provide ongoing training for new Master Gardener Associates the greenhouse directors propose the following:
 - a. Divide each new class into small groups during week 2 or 3.
 - b. Require each group to plant seeds or cuttings, then on a weekly basis each group would be responsible for ongoing care of their group of plants, bumping up, feeding, pruning or other tasks as required.
 - c. Since all new Associates must spend 4 hours in the greenhouse this could provide specific tasks for these groups to complete. If additional time is needed the time could be applied to the Greentime hours.
 - d. This process would acquaint all new Master Gardeners with the environment in the greenhouse, propagation knowledge, and help to understand that the greenhouse is there for all Master Gardeners.

10/09/2007

JMG ACTIVITIES – October 10, 2007
Ginny Grant

JMG Activity – Texian Market Day at George Ranch – October 27, 2007

JMG Activity – Opening of Sugar Land Memorial Park – November 10, 2007

Plants in the Classroom – November 19, 2007

In-service training for FBISD science teachers. PIC2 topics will include soil science, botany, and pollinators. PIC2 target group grades K-2 teachers.