



**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
May 9, 2007**

Attendees –

Board Members Present: Peg d'Hemecourt, Brenda Dresner, Glenn Dresner, Ginny Grant, Mike Greenwood, Mary Beth McCaughey, and Marilyn Almon.

Board Members Absent: Sallie Bourgeois, Barbara Brannon, James Buckley, Nat Gruesen, and Carolyn McDaniel

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 7:08 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – After a motion by Brenda Dresner and a second by Mike Greenwood, the amended minutes of the April 11, 2007, Board Meeting were unanimously approved.

Officer and Committee Reports:

President – Mary Beth McCaughey

- Mary Beth announced that the annual financial report to the membership, presented along with the 2007 approved budget at the April members meeting, was well received. This also afforded another opportunity to reinforce the success of the 2007 fundraisers.
- A replacement for Communications Director has not been actively pursued and Mary Beth again asked Board members for suggestions for a suitable person to fill the position.
- Mary Beth reported that she, Ginny Grant, and Margo McDowell represented FBCMG at the Sugar Land H2O Expo highlighting Drinking Water Week.
- Mary Beth congratulated Ginny on achieving third place in the TMGA Master Gardener of the Year Award category.
- Board members were reminded that everyone needed eight volunteer hours in the gardens, greenhouse, and/or hotline areas for re-certification.
- Mary Beth thanked Marilyn Almon for conducting the May workday advanced training seminar on propagation.

Vice President - Peg d'Hemecourt

- No report.

Secretary – Marilyn Almon

- Marilyn reported that the Board meeting minutes for the months of December 2006 through March 2007 were posted on the website in the Members Only section.

Treasurer – Mike Greenwood

- Glenn Dresner asked Mary Beth to send a reminder to all chairpersons about the midyear budget review to be held in July.
- Mary Beth stated that the Board will be better equipped to evaluate the gazebo project after the midyear review.
- The July 11th Board meeting will be held at the regularly scheduled time of 9 a.m. Holding the May Board meeting in the evening did not yield the anticipated Board member attendance.
- The October Board meeting will be held in the evening with the additional objective of planning ahead for 2008.

Awards – Carolyn McDaniel

- Carolyn was not present.
- Margo reported that the soil-related presentations at the TMGA conference were excellent. It appeared that most people were happy with the speakers and presentations offered. Felder Rushing was entertaining. Over 700 people attended the conference, making it the largest attended conference to date. She had no feedback on the tours. Conroe will be the site for the 2008 annual event.
- Ginny Grant and Sallie Bourgeois attended the TMGA Directors meeting held during the conference. Ginny reported that there was some discussion about memorial donations, but the topic was tabled until the August meeting, since the procedure for handling memorials is not currently addressed in the TMGA By-laws.
- Glenn asked if it might be possible in the future to ask members who attend the seminars to share their information with the membership.
- Margo stated that there was good dialogue at the coordinators meeting regarding changes to volunteer hours and that there are many new agents in Texas. Some disappointment was voiced that the A&M Soil Labs return similar values on soil tests, pointing to a need for better microbial analysis.
- Margo also commented that Grovesite is available for web hosting.

Communications – Open position

- No report.
- Mary Beth will send the July publicity notices to the monthly publications if a communications director has not been approved by then.
- Robert Goehring continues to work on updating the FBMG website.
- Peg suggested posting background information about upcoming speakers on the website. Mary Beth stated that when information for press releases is submitted, it typically contains the speaker's name, title, credentials, and a line about the topic.
- Mary Beth commented that the educational mission of The Grapevine is becoming recognized.

Community Relations – Brenda Dresner

- Brenda reported that there was an article in the Fort Bend Herald on May 7th about FBCMG. It served as a prelude to the upcoming Green Thumb seminar on May 10th.
- Brenda, Jodie Douglass, and Mary Beth will meet Thursday to discuss plans for the next Green Thumb session. It may be necessary to pay a facility rental fee, but there was no disapproval by Board members about doing so.
- John Ferguson from Nature's Way will speak on the soil food web at the FBCMG monthly meeting on May 17th. The usual members meeting after the speaker will not be held since it will be a two hour presentation.
- Brenda is working with Leon Macha to coordinate a field trip to Greenleaf Nursery in El Campo, which is targeted to be a two hour advanced training opportunity. The meeting room there can accommodate only 40 people. Brenda, Margo, and Becky Smith have toured the facility.

Fundraising – Barbara Brannon

- Barbara was not present.
- Mary Beth asked Brenda and Margo to meet with Barbara about initiating planning for the In the Garden seminar.
- Mary Beth inquired about outstanding copying charges for 2007 fundraisers and Margo responded that she would provide the amount that is owed to Extension.
- In 2008, the fruit tree sale will be held on February 9th and the perennial sale will be held on March 8th.
- Brenda asked about scheduling a speaker on perennials prior to the perennial sale next year. Mary Beth suggested Ray Scher (Urban Harvest) as a possibility for the January monthly meeting just prior to the fruit tree sale. He grows produce for the farmers market in his urban garden.
- Mary Beth also recommended Cody Dennison, Waller County agent, as a possibility to speak about edible plants.
- Mary Beth and Tricia Bradbury are developing a presentation on gardening with pets and are in need of anecdotes.

Greenhouse – Glenn Dresner and James Buckley, co-chairs

- Glenn's report is attached to the minutes.
- Glenn stated that thanks to Cliff Bergman, the louvers have been repaired and are now functioning properly.
- Glenn suggested partnering with activities in the range to invite target shooting participants to visit the gardens. Mary Beth proposed displaying a sign on workdays indicating that master gardeners are working in the gardens.
- Mary Beth expressed appreciation to Glenn, James, and Cliff for their continued work in the Greenhouse.

Landscape – Nat Gruesen

- Nat was not present.
- The Cottage Garden rail project has been completed, thanks to Glenn and James who removed the old rail and constructed the new rail.
- The Berry Patch is producing large quantities of berries, reporting 80 pounds harvested in the few days prior to the Board meeting. Pies and cobblers have been made for the Extension office and the Spring 07 master gardener classes. Ginny Grant commented that berries should be donated to a food bank.

- Glenn will email Nat about fall plant starts in the Greenhouse.
- Regrettably, Ellen Frank has resigned as chair of the Butterfly Garden. She has not been replaced.
- Laurie Whittle, a new master gardener associate, and Mary Beth will refurbish the plantings in the Front Yard. Extension office personnel will maintain the area after it is replanted.

Member Relations – Sallie Bourgeois

- Sallie was not present.
- Mary Beth stated that a new password is needed for the Members Only section of the website.

Youth Activities – Ginny Grant

- Ginny's report is attached to the minutes.
- Holly Dern and Pam Tatge recently attended the JMG Specialist Training.
- The National Youth Service Day activity in Fort Bend County did not materialize due to a lack of direction. Master gardeners were present to help.
- A three hour session of Plants in the Classroom was requested by Kathy Treibs, FBISD.
- Margo commented that she received an inquiry from a teacher about the availability of Part 2 of Plants in the Classroom. There currently is no plan for holding Part 2.
- Cliff Bergman is working on a new incubator for the AgTivity Barn.
- Ginny requested earlier readiness preparation for the AgTivity Barn this year rather than starting at the usual later date.
- Aquaculture will be a new feature added to the AgTivity Barn this year.

Cooperative Extension Advisor Reports:

CEA-Horticulture – Mark Countryman

- Mark was not present.

FBCMG Master Volunteer Coordinator – Margo McDowell

- Margo announced that Fall 06 graduation will be held on June 7th. Board members are asked to bring appetizers.
- The Fall 07 class will begin August 8th.
- The practice of offering only one master gardener class per year is still under consideration.
- Margo is exploring the initiation of a mentoring program for associates which would involve many master gardeners and possibly begin with the Fall 07 class. Margo is researching the mentoring concept used in other counties. Peg has a mentoring program outline to share with Margo which is used by the Galveston Bay Master Naturalists.

Standing Committee Reports:

Governance Committee

- The committee's recommendation is attached to the minutes.

- After a motion by Peg and a second by Brenda, Board members unanimously approved the addition of item 3 to Section 9, Re-Certification, which states that volunteer hours required for certification will not be changed without the prior consent of the Fort Bend County Extension Director. This stipulation allows FBCMG to remain in line with TMGA Management Guidelines.
- Marilyn will forward the most recent revision of the Operations Manual to Robert Goehring for posting on the website.
- The governance committee will develop proposed verbiage concerning memorial contributions.
- Margo has information regarding scholarship verbiage.

Other

- Mary Beth stated that a quarterly financial review of FBCMG records needs to be conducted, preferably by July, and by a member not serving on the Board of Directors.
- Ginny inquired whether the 2006 Form 990 had been filed.

Old Business:

Open Garden Days

- Saturday with the FBCMGs will be held as scheduled on June 2nd from 9 to 11 a.m.
- A volunteer will be needed to help with the Hotline.
- Mary Beth will submit publicity for the community calendar.
- Margo reminded everyone that June 2nd is also Emergency Preparedness Day in Fort Bend County.

Survey of Non-renewing Members

- Mary Beth will check with Sallie on the status.

Pest Control Policy

- Mary Beth has ghostwritten an article for The Grapevine.

New Business:

- None

After a motion by Brenda, seconded by Ginny, and approved by all, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2007, at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Marilyn Almon
 Secretary, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.
 6/06/2007

Amended 6/13/2007

Report on Greenhouse Activities

April-May 2007

- The new shade cloth for the greenhouse is on order and will be installed as soon as it arrives.
- The original motor that operated the inlet louvers to the greenhouse has not been functional for many years. To open the inlet louvers to the evaporative coolers on the north side of the greenhouse, it was necessary to open them using a drill with an adapter to the gear assembly. This manual method failed and it was decided to disassemble the motor/gear box. With the expertise of Cliff Bergman and help from Doug Staff and others the motor/gear box was taken apart and any unnecessary functional parts were removed. After the motor/gear box was put back together it worked and was capable of opening the louvers. A manual switch was installed on the inside of the greenhouse next to the coolers so the louvers can now be opened/closed as needed to match the outside weather conditions. In addition, the steel posts that rusted off at ground level were replaced so the motor/gear box would have more solid support to operate from.
- Shelves were installed to the storage lockers in the greenhouse for keeping up with supplies and spare parts used.
- As soon as the wet weather allows, the outside drains on the north side of the greenhouse will be installed to strive to keep this area drier.
- We are continuing to experiment with various mixtures of the Sunshine Mix materials to see which one(s) will produce the best results. Presently, we are using Sunshine #3 for starting seeds and Sunshine #5 for propagation and replanting.
- We have modified the planting table in the greenhouse by raising it to a higher level so it will be easier on the backs of the people planting and repotting.

Submitted by Glenn Dresner
May 6, 2007

JMG ACTIVITIES – May 8, 2007

Ginny Grant

Holly Dern and Pam Tatge completed JMG Specialist training April 24-25, 2007. Both are dedicated volunteers at their children's elementary schools; hopefully we'll be able to utilize their newly acquired knowledge and enthusiasm.

Plants in the Classroom/JMG School Presentation – April 11, 2007

Colony Meadows Elementary, Sugar Land

Don Johnson presented "Beneficial Insects" to the entire 5th grade during the school's Science Week.

135 children.

JMG Presentation at Brazos Bend-Earth Day Celebration – April 14, 2007

Approximately 200 children made paper pots and planted green bean seeds.

JMG School Garden Train the Trainer Session - April 17, 2007

Cambridge Montessori School, Sugar Land

Mac and Ginny presented Train the Trainer Session with 14 teachers. Program about how to begin a school garden. Next section of school gardens will be presented on May 8th.

JMG School Activity – April 18, 2007

Southwest Church of the Nazarene, Sugar Land

Mac and Ginny helped 19 Mothers' Day Out children make paper pots and plant green bean seeds.

JMG School Garden Meeting – April 18; April 25; May 2, 2007

Debbie Crawford, GT Facilitator, Hutchison & Pink Elementaries, LCISD

Working with teachers at Hutchison Elementary, Richmond, and planning native plant garden in front of school; garden work will begin during the summer. One of the teachers dug up the unwanted Vitex tree in the MG butterfly garden and planted it at the school on May 5th. JMG activities will begin in the fall.

National Youth Service Day – April 21, 2007

Cornerstones for Life, Richmond

Communication problems and unexpected delays resulted in MG volunteers leaving after waiting 1 1/2 hours without instructions. Director called the following week with apologies for problem, but thanking MG for helping. Set-up volunteers did not show-up and other volunteers had to complete their assignments, resulting in very late start.

JMG ACTIVITIES

May 8, 2007

Plants in the Classroom Meeting – April 23, 2007

Met to discuss the new format and to determine who would lead each team. Margo sent APBEE asking for volunteers. Next meeting May 29th.

On May 4th, Kathy Treibs, FBISD, contacted Don Johnson requesting a summer PIC session on Nitrogen & Carbon cycles and Vermiculture. Margo and Ginny were asked to present the program; date to be determined.

4-H Day Camp Meeting – April 30, 2007

Initial meeting on April 30th. Anticipating 150 children plus student leaders. JMG activity will be presented by MG group. Next meeting May 21, 2007.

JMG School Garden – Seguin Elementary – May 4, 2007

Denise Adams, Fort Bend Herald, photographed all of the children and discussed information about the school and JMG. Photos and an article should appear in upcoming edition.

JMG School Garden – May 4, 2007

Deaf Smith Elementary, Richmond

Discussed the Volunteer workday held on April 21, 2007; committee chair and several teachers were present. Photographs and editorial appeared in Herald. The editorial mentioned the garden volunteers at Smith and emphasized the need for volunteerism. Garden is continuing to flourish and program will continue in the fall.

JMG School Garden Train the Trainer Session – May 8, 2007

Cambridge Montessori School, Sugar Land

Mac and Ginny presented second Train the Trainer Session with 12 teachers. Program about how to build raised garden beds. Mark Countryman also attended and answered questions.

JMG Presentation – Keep Sugar Land Beautiful-Water Expo – May 9, 2007

Oyster Creek Park, Sugar Land 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.

JMG activity-How Watery are You?

Ag'Tivity Barn Meeting (Fair Group) – June 18, 2007

Discuss new ideas, float decorations and new displays.

4-H Day Camp – July 12, 2007

JMG Activity

Proposed modification to the Operations Manual to remain in line with TMGA Management Guidelines:

If you remember, at the March 14 Board meeting, Peg questioned the procedure for modifying the hours certification requirement, pointing out that our procedure conflicted with TMGA Management Guidelines. The Guidelines state that the County Extension Agent has the authority to change the hours requirement.

The Governance Committee proposes modifying the Operations Manual, with the addition of item 3 (in blue font). The remaining alternative would be to amend the FBCMG By-laws, requiring a vote of the general membership for approval.

9. Re-Certification

- A. Requirements In order to maintain certification as a Fort Bend County Master Gardener, a volunteer must complete the following:
1. A minimum of 12 hours of advanced training, and
 2. A minimum of 24 hours of volunteer service hours each year. Eight of the 24 hours must be obtained by working in either the Hotline, greenhouse, or demonstration gardens, or a combination of the Hotline, greenhouse, and demonstration gardens.
 3. Volunteer hours required for certification will not be changed without the prior consent of the Fort Bend County Extension Director.

Proposed May 8, 2007
Approved May 9, 2007