

**West Virginia Master Gardener Association
Board of Directors Meeting
October 13, 2007**

The October 13, 2007 Board of Directors Meeting of the West Virginia Master Gardener Association was held at Cedar Lakes, Ripley, West Virginia with 20 members attending.

President, Jill Dolen, welcomed group and called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

The President announced the June 1, 2007 minutes were distributed electronically. The President called for corrections and/or additions. With none, a motion was made (John Griggs) and duly seconded that the minutes be approved as written. The motion passed.

Reports:

1. **Extension Service-** John Jett reported the following:

- (a.) The first fund raiser for the 2011 international meeting has begun. John has contacted State Master Gardener Coordinators across the nation, and has begun to sell the license plates, "Master Gardeners know all the good dirt". Thus far 275 have been sold. If local WV Master Gardener programs are interested in buying the plates they may contact John.
- (b.) The special rate for subscriptions to Fine Gardening magazine will be available through December, 2007. For each subscription the WVMGA receives \$10. Board members were asked to be mindful of the deadline and to remind local master gardeners of this opportunity.
- (c.) E-Extension, a national web-based program with different communities will go public sometime this fall. There are about 5000 Questions/Answers ready to be place on the website. When the site goes public, users will be able to access the "Ask the Expert" section by registering. At this time, there is a call for local master gardeners who are interested in serving as "1st responders" for questions applicable to their county or region of the state. Those interested should contact John Jett.
- (d.) National Consumer Horticulture Committee. John Jett reported he represents the northeast region on that committee. Most recently they meet with the USDA component of Extension in Washington, DC to explore opportunities for partnering.
- (e.) A new master gardener program is a possibility in the Grant County area. Participants from Grant, Hardy, Hampshire and Mineral Counties are just completing the first master gardener training program.
- (f.) There are vacancies for Extension Agents in Kanawha, Monongalia, and Hampshire Counties. Some discussion occurred relative to the Extension Agent position in Marion County which has been vacant for approximately 5 years. John Jett and the Marion County group will follow up on this issue.

2. **Vice-President's Report**

- (a.) Polly Reynolds shared the importance of reviewing and clarifying board member roles and responsibilities. She encouraged members to wear their name badges. The board is currently exploring ways that we might quickly identify voting board members, when the board needs to take action. Vice-President Reynolds also reported that she is forming a Motivation Team that will work to make all feel both welcome and valued at board meetings. She distributed an "Issue/Action" sheet that will be used at each meeting. She asked members members to jot down things that came to mind that they believe should be addressed by the board.

These items will be reviewed for appropriateness and discussed under new business as time allows.

3. Treasurer's Report

- (a.) Treasurer Jan Hargate reported that the WVMGA still has two active checking accounts. The account established by the past treasurer will be closed as soon as one remaining check clears the bank. This account presently has a balance of \$895.07. The new account (Putnam County Bank) has a present balance of \$10,221.91 which includes the receipt of \$3000. from the Spring Conference in Greenbrier County. The treasurer also reported the WVMGA has \$49,527.77 in the Foundation Endowment account and \$2,623.77 in the Foundation cash account.

Recap:	Checking Account #1	\$ 895.07
	Checking Account #2	10221.91
	Total in Accounts	\$11,116.98
	Foundation Endowment	\$49527.77
	Foundation Cash Acct.	2623.77
	Total Foundation	\$52,151.54

- (b.) Some discussion occurred relative to the Scholarship Program recruiting of potential scholarship recipients and the guidelines for awarding scholarship. John Jett related that at some point we may want to review the guidelines. Presently, the University is experiencing an increase in the number of students enrolled in the horticulture program, and this has necessitated the addition of one faculty position.

4. Secretary's Report

- (a.) Secretary Diana Higginbotham has implemented a new sign-in sheet. It is hopeful that this sheet will help the Executive Committee keep abreast of changes in representation at the local level. She is also currently distributed a chapter Update Form and hopes to have a response from every group within 30 days. She will follow up with groups who do not respond to the first call for updated information.

5. Strategic Planning Retreat- September 29-30, 2007, Jackson Mills, WV – Diana Higginbotham reported the following:

- (a.) A total of 24 people attended the retreat, with 10 local programs represented.
- (b.) The data aggregation is almost complete but goals and strategies still need refined.
- (c.) Several themes emerged across all discussion groups. These included the need for better communication across the organization, the need to look at membership retention, issues around orientation, education, advanced training. A number of strategies were proposed and plans are underway to work on several items now. Diana shared just a few of the strategies evolved from discussions: publishing of a newsletter, enhancing the WVU Extension/WVMG Website and promoting its use, revising new member orientation tools, revising WVMG marketing brochure, conducting a survey to collect baseline data regard to retention at the local program level.
- (d.) A preliminary review of the results of the two-day retreat will be done by members of the Executive Committee over the next weeks. Hopefully, Strategic Plan will be ready for distribution at the January 2008 Board Meeting.
- (e.) The plan will most likely require some Bylaws revisions.

State Conference Committee Report – Polly Reynolds, Vice-President & Chairperson, reported the following:

- (a.) This committee will become an active committee, and its membership is comprised of the following- the WVMGA Vice-President (chair), the WVMGA State Coordinator, the WVMGA Treasurer, the previous year conference host representative, the previous year conference extension agent, the current year host representative and the current year extension agent.
- (b.) In the near future the committee will be drafting guidelines for state conference planning.

Report Summary from 2007 State Conference hosted by Greenbrier County – Delores Barber reporting on behalf of Willa Izzo.

- (a.) Participant Evaluations of the conference were overall excellent. 87% Excellent 13% Good.
- (b.) Friday evening activities were both innovative and lots of fun.
- (c.) A total of 196 master gardeners attended. Projected attendance was 300.
- (d.) WVU Extension paid \$2492. for meeting space at the State Fair Grounds. Profits in this amount were to be earmarked to support the 2011 International Conference.
- (f.) Total conference income was \$20,450. Expenditures, \$20,449 including the meeting space costs totaled \$22941. Some discussion followed including the need to consider raising registration fees, the need to promote conference attendance at the local level. It was also noted that attendance might have been influenced holding two state conferences in a 6-7 month period of time.

Action Taken: It was moved (Pat Force) and seconded by that we defer until after the 2008 Conference the earmarking of \$2492 for the 2011 International Conference from the WVMGA treasury. The motion was approved.

Report from 2008 State Conference Committee - Ron Wolford (Kanawha County) reporting:

- (a.) Planning is well underway. Kanawha and Putnam County are collaborating on this conference. The conference is scheduled for April 4-6, 2008 at the John 23 Center, in Charleston. The conference theme is “Naturally Native”. The opening activity on Friday will be “A Taste of West Virginia.” A nationally recognized keynoter has committed. A subcommittee has actively been fundraising and has secured about \$4200 in commitments as of this date. They are also selling ad space in the conference program as a means of raising funds. Registration and lodging information will be available in December 2007.

Report from the 2009 Conference Committee – Karen Toothman (Preston County) reporting:

- (a.) Preston County is being assisted by Monongalia County in planning the 2009 conference.
- (b.) The conference will be held at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in Morgantown.
- (c.) They will be ready to announce the theme in the near future.
- (d.) Currently they are working on a conference budget.

2011 International Conference Planning – Delores Barber, John Jett, and Polly Reynolds reporting:

- (a.) The conference theme is “Color It Green, in a Wild and Wonderful Way”. The logo was displayed and will be place in the WVU Extension/WVMGA Website in the near future.
- (b.) The cost reports from the Little Rock International Conference have been helpful to the planning committee as they begin to develop a conference budget and identify funding sources. The total cost for the Little Rock conference was approximately \$500,000. with approximately one-half derived from registration and the remainder from sales of promotional items, sponsorships and “in-kind” gifts.

- (c.) Julie Cryser, Extension Service Development Officer, is actively involved in looking at funding sources. Some discussion occurred relative to voluntary contributions by local master gardeners. Further discussion on this topic will occur at the January Board meeting.
- (d.) It is imminent that local Master Gardener program become involved right now to
 - (1.) help identify potential sponsors from their local areas. Each local unit is charged with brainstorming to generate a list of 25 potential sponsors. These are to be forwarded to Delores Barber as soon as possible.
 - (2.) help identify potential sponsors for a “top 100 list”. These will be nationally recognized companies or corporations. This list is to be forwarded to John Jett as soon as possible.
- (e.) A draft of possible conference committees was distributed. Board members were encouraged to share the draft with the local program. The International Committee is interested in a listing of volunteers and their respective talents, to be considered for committee appointments. Finalizing committee structure and appointments will not occur until sometime in 2008. Ideas and names may be submitted to Delores Barber.
- (f.) Communication Flow regarding the International Conference: The Planning Committee has developed a strategy using regional coordinators who will move communications between the local groups and the planning committee. The coordinators and their respective counties are as follows:

Delores Barber	Kanawha, Cabell, Lincoln, Putnam, Boone, Mason counties
Gary Perigo	Marshall, Hancock, Brooke, Ohio counties
Larry Lowe	Morgan, Berkley, Jefferson, Hampshire, Mineral counties
Lee Reger	Harrison, Lewis, Doddridge, Gilmer, Upshur, Barbour counties
John Griggs	Monongalia, Hardy, Grant, Randolph, Tucker, Pendleton counties
Judy Selders	Marion, Wetzel, Tyler, Preston, Taylor counties
Jane Lundbald	Wood, Wirt, Pleasant, Ritchie, Calhoun, Roane, Jackson counties
Pat Izzo	Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Webster, Monroe, Braxton counties
Polly Reynolds	Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, Summers, Clay, Mercer counties
Jill Dolen	Wayne, Mingo, Logan, Wyoming, McDowell counties

PR Committee Report - Diana Higginbotham, Secretary/Chairperson shared tips on how to work with the media, specifically when being interviewed “impromptu”. Polly Reynolds and Diana role played a “bad” impromptu interview. Tips included the importance of developing 2-3 key points (commercials), how to use a bridging and flagging technique to make sure you get your key points into a 5-10 second sound bit.

Awards Committee Report – Diana Higginbotham, Chairperson reporting. During 2007 the awards committee finalized guidelines for both the Golden Trowel and Honorary Master Gardener Awards. Two awards were presented at the Spring Conference- Honorary Master Gardener to Frank Pelurie of Kanawha county, and the Golden Trowel Award to Wayne Bennett of Putnam County. Within the next few weeks the award criteria will be posted on the WVMGA Website, and the committee will transition to the new chairperson.

New Business:

McCutcheon Memorial Fund Contribution:

After discussion, it was moved (Delores Barber), and seconded that the WVMGA contribute a sum in the amount of \$500 to the Tom McCutcheon Memorial Fund. The motion passed.

Sale of WVMG State Conference Posters: Delores Barber has posters from the 2005, 2006 and 2007 conferences. These sell for \$10 each or a set of 3 posters for \$25. The revenue generated from the sale of these posters will go into the WVMGA treasury. Board members were asked to share this information with their local groups.

Review of Issue/Action Needed Slips:

(a). concerns about retention of members- will address with Strategic Plan

For the Good of the Order:

Committee Appointments: Vice-President Reynolds distributed a sign up sheet for committees. All Board members were encouraged to sign up for a committee of interest.

Future Meetings: After discussion the following meeting dates/locations were agreed upon:

January 12, 2007	Chamber of Commerce Building, Fairmont, WV
April 4, 2008	WVMGA Spring Conference, Charleston, WV
July 12, 2008	Jackson Mills, WV TBA
October 11, 2008	Flatwoods, WV. TBA
January 17, 2009	TBA

It was moved (Ron Wolford) and seconded that the President be authorized to spend up to \$100 as necessary to secure meeting places. The motion passed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Diana M. Higginbotham, Secretary

Jill Dolen, President