

**West Virginia Master Gardener Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
October 11, 2008**

The October 11, 2008 Board of Directors Meeting of the West Virginia Master Gardener Association was held at the Waffle Hut, Flatwoods, WV with 24 members attending.

President Polly Reynolds welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

The President called for corrections and/or additions to the electronically distributed minutes of the July 12, 2008 meeting. With no corrections, it was moved, seconded and approved that the minutes be accepted as published.

Treasurer Jan Hargate reported a current balance in the association checking account of \$ 17,035.23. Funds earmarked for the 2011 International Conference have been transferred to the Foundation account. As of the date of this meeting, the treasurer had not received an update on the Foundation accounts. After some discussion, it was moved by Jane Stalnaker, seconded and approved that the treasurer's report be accepted.

**WVU Extension Service Report-** John Jett reported the following:

1. Green Thumb, Healthy Joints Grant funds will be available again in 2009. Local groups were encouraged to apply for these grants. The application process is relatively simple, and it is likely more funds will be available in the coming year.
2. Changes in County Extension Agents: John Jett overviewed vacancies and pending vacancies as follows:
  - Kanawha County- 2<sup>nd</sup>. Search complete; selection pending
  - Taylor/Marion Counties- John Murray hired
  - Richie/Doddridge/Gilmer Counties- vacancy
  - Wood County- Todd Belcher
  - Brooke/Hancock Counties- Carol Scheebaum hired
  - Putnam /Cabell Counties- vacancy
3. E-extension, a national web-based program that includes a horticulture community of practice, is operational. The program is titled "Landscapes & Lawns". The "Ask the Expert" component is available to the public. WVU Extension county agents and master gardeners with an interest in serving as first responders for questions applicable to their county or region of the state are still needed. John encouraged all to get an e-extension ID, and to access the site and get acquainted with the various areas on the site. Training as "first responders" will be done via teleconference and online. This should be scheduled within the next three months. A handout was distributed with the URL for accessing eXtensionID.
4. The State Master Gardener Program Coordinators met this past week in Crystal City, Virginia (DC Area). According to John, twenty-five states had representatives at this meeting, and the National Consumer Horticulture Community of Practice group met at the same time. This was the first opportunity for the WV Master Gardener Program to formally market the 2011 Conference. The display board used and business cards prepared for marketing were available for all to see.
5. John Jett reported the new *Master Gardener Manuel* is ready for printing.

The WVMGA Board meeting recessed for one hour for Committee Meeting time and resumed after lunch with the following committee reports and business:

**Executive Committee Report-** President Polly Reynolds shared that the Executive Committee has directed the treasurer to make a contribution to the TriCounty MG Association in memory of Carol Cox. Polly then proceeded to quiz the group on the goal sheet distributed at the July meeting. Bananas were awarded to those who could correctly identify the “B’s”. Lee Reger received the “Top Banana Award.”

**State Conference Committee-** Reports were also given by Chairpersons for the following state conferences:

2009 State MG Conference: Karen Toothman reported the conference will be held May 1-3, in Morgantown at the Ramada Inn. Karen reported the keynote speaker will be Parker Andes, a graduate of WVU, who is presently Director of Horticulture at the Biltmore Estates, Ashville, N.C. The planning group is in the process of finalizing workshops. At this time there are three planned tours. Complete information will be available at the January meeting.

2010 State MG Conference: Diana Higginbotham reported the conference will be held April 16-18, 2010 at the Bridgeport Convention Center. A steering committee and three subcommittees are already at work.

President Reynolds reminded the group that the Board has not yet made a decision relative to the state association hosting a state conference in 2011. This business will occur at a future meeting.

**Fiscal Planning Committee-** Treasurer/Chairperson Jan Hargate discussed two operating concepts that she will employ this year for fiscal and budget purposes. These are

- (1) The income the board receives in one year is what the board will operate with.
- (2) Any extra money will be earmarked as a “reserve account”.

The treasurer overviewed a proposed budget for 2009.

After discussion it was moved by John Griggs that the proposed budget for 2009 be approved, The motion was seconded and approved.

The treasurer also shared the draft of a board budget planning cycle with the group.

After discussion, it was moved by Neva Gocke that the proposed planning cycle for the organization’s budget planning be approved. The motion was seconded and approved.

Some discussion occurred relative to cash advances provided to counties hosting the state conference. The treasurer is in support of a standing rule regarding cash advances. This item was deferred to new business.

Discussion occurred relative to 501c3 status. The question arose about local groups without 501c3 status accepting monies and how this should be handled.

Action to be taken: John Jett will discuss with Julie Cryser and seek clarification on this matter and report back to the group.

Treasurer Jan Hargate reported the Fiscal Planning Committee will be sending out a survey to seek input from local groups about use of funds from conference auction proceeds. Previously these have all gone to the Foundation and were committed to the scholarship program.

**Volunteer Activities & Programs Committee-** In the absence of the chairperson, President Reynolds shared that each local group would be receiving a survey that will look at projects being done at the local level, and seek input regarding a second potential statewide project.

**2011 International Conference Report-** John Jett discussed the need for the 2011 Conference Committee to have the authority to administer funds as needed to move forth with conference planning. He shared the estimated budget for this conference is \$ 500,000 with approximately 60% of the revenue coming from registration. Lee Reger is serving as 2011 International Conference Committee treasurer and working closely with Jan Hargate, WVMGA Board Treasurer.

After discussion, it was moved by Jan Hargate, seconded by John Griggs and approved that the 2011 Conference Committee be authorized to spend, as necessary, earmarked international conference funds without approval of the WVMGA Board and that they report expenditures at the regularly occurring board meetings.

John also reported that a major conference sponsor has been secured- Ball Seed (\$40,000-\$50,000 cash and in-kind contributions) and other sponsors are still being sought. Local groups were again encouraged to submit names of companies, corporations within their counties that might also contribute. These names may be submitted directly to John Jett via email.

**Public Relations & Communication Committee-** Diana Higginbotham, Secretary/Chairperson, commended Debra Lingerfelt, committee member/newsletter editor on her work on the newsletter. During the committee meeting, discussion occurred relative to those who do not have access or have difficulty accessing the newsletter. Several strategies are proposed for local groups:

- (1). Duplicating and keeping several copies of the newsletter in the extension office
- (2). Duplicating and distributing copies at meetings to members who do not have access to a computer or the internet.
- (3.) Sharing the “TIPS to ACCESS the WVMG Website” with members at the local level.

The committee is in process of reviewing the WVMG Program Brochure, and over the next months will be working on other components of the Five Year Plan that focus on marketing the program within the state.

**Membership Retention Committee-** In absence of the chairperson, Kim Van Rijn reported the committee is in the process of developing a membership retention survey. Some discussion occurred relative to the target audience for the survey. Generally speaking it was agreed that the data needed would come from both the local Master Gardener Associations and extension offices. It was suggested that the survey go to both.

**Education & Continuing Education Committee-** In the absence of the chairperson, John Griggs reported preliminary findings relative to states' requirements for continuing education hours and volunteer hours indicate that West Virginia requirements are the lowest. There are no recommendations for change in required hours at this time. He reported the group also discussed what counts as education hours and what counts as volunteer hours. There seems to be some differences across counties. Following discussion, John Jett responded that there may be a need for some guidance from the state level.

**Awards Committee-** Lee Reger, Chairperson, reminded the membership that the guidelines for both the Golden Trowel Award and the Honorary Master Gardener Awards, and sample nominations for each award are available on the WVMG Website.

Action: Local organizations are encouraged to review award criteria and considering submitting nominations no later than the deadline, [February 1, 2009](#).

**Old Business- none**

**New Business**

**Appointment of Nominating Committee-** President Reynolds shared the recommendations of the Executive Committee for Nominating Committee membership. Proposed members included Pat Izzo, Linda Watkins, and John Griggs.

It was moved by Karen Toothman that the following members serve as the WVMGA Board Nominating Committee- Pat Izzo, Linda Watkins, and John Griggs. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Cash Advance for 2009 Conference-** Karen Toothman, on behalf of the Monongalia/Preston group requested a cash advance for the 2009 State Conference.

After some discussion, a motion was made by John Griggs that the WVMGA Board allocate \$3000 as a cash advancement for the 2009 State Conference. The motion was seconded and approved.

