

**West Virginia Master Gardener Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
January 10, 2009**

The January 10, 2009 Meeting of the Board of Directors Meeting of the West Virginia Master Gardener Association was held at the Waffle Hut, Flatwoods, WV with 31 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 October 11, 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 \$ \$12,919.00 with \$7970.00 earmarked from the 2008 State Conference and for the 2009 State Conference, leaving a net balance in the checking account of \$4949.00. The current balances in Foundation accounts are as follows: \$38,082.30 Scholarship and \$35,132.95 cash account. The treasurer's report will be placed on file.

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

1. Changes in County Extension Agents: John Jett reviewed the current status in filling extension agent vacancies:
  - Kanawha County- John Porter, Extension Agent for Kanawha County was introduced to the group. John began his appointment on January 5, 2009.
  - Richie/Doddridge/Gilmer Counties (Tri-county) - search closes January 15, 2009.
  - Cabell County- search closes January 15, 2009
  - Putnam County- search and selection completed; in final processes.
  - Pocahontas County- will be advertising this vacancy
2. John continues to be actively involved with the National Horticulture Committee. They are working with the USDA, extension group to complete data collection process, in their first attempt to conduct an evaluation of the Master Gardener Program at the national level.
3. Green Thumb, Healthy Joints Grant funds will be available soon. Local groups were encouraged to apply for these grants. John will distribute the information and applications as soon as they are available.
4. Garden Calendars were distributed to the group.

**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 a contribution to the TriCounty MG Association in memory of Carol Cox has been made. In addition, the Executive Committee had directed the Chairperson of the Awards Committee to purchase a replacement plaque for Cathy Brown who recently lost her home (and plaque) in a fire.

Polly then proceeded to share with the group, the accomplishments of the board over the past 2 years. She used a display poster and train, climbing a relative steep grade to illustrate the strides we have made. She encouraged all to look at the poster during the lunch break.

**State Conference Committee-** In the absence of Chairperson Willa Izzo, Julie Milam reported the following:

Most of the discussion centered on the financial aspects of conference management (standardized budget, fiscal accountability, delineation between county and state association responsibilities). It was also acknowledged that a conference time line was critical to good conference management and marketing. It was suggested that a separate time be committed to this committee working on conference guidelines. Those present agreed.

Reports were also given by Chairpersons for the following state conferences:

2009 State MG Conference: Karen Toothman distributed a draft brochure of the conference and highlighted the various workshops planned. The registration form is almost ready and will be available shortly. .

2010 State MG Conference: Diana Higginbotham reported the conference will be held April 16-18, 2010 at the Bridgeport Convention Center. Committees are working hard.

**Fiscal Planning Committee-** Treasurer/Chairperson Jan Hargate presented two new standing rules that are recommended by the Fiscal Planning Committee. Copies of the recommended standing rules were distributed to the members.

**Standing Rule on Conference Advances:**

Jan Hargate moved (seconded by Jean Dawson) that the annual conference budget shall be prepared by the host group by June 1 of the calendar year prior to the date of their conference. Any necessary cash advance will be stated in the conference budget. The proposed conference budget will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and presented to the July Board meeting for approval. At that time any approved cash advance will be paid by WVMGA to the conference committee.

Some discussion occurred relative to this standing rule specifically in the area of deposits required by hotels and presenters one to two years in advance of a conference. Generally speaking it was agreed that a conference committee might bring its budget and request for advance funds to the Executive Committee earlier, and that advance funds might come, when needed, the WVMGA checking account.

After discussion the Standing Rule on Conference Advances was approved.

**Standing Rule for Reserve Account:**

Jan Hargate moved (seconded by Rebecca Eneix-Chong) that the WVMGA Checking account should maintain a minimum net balance of \$5000. at all times.

After discussion, the Standing Rule for the Reserve Account was approved.

**2008 Auction Moneys and the Scholarship Account:** Treasurer Jan Hargate reported the Fiscal Planning Committee recommended that for school year 2009-2010, the scholarship amount be increased from \$1000 to \$2000, with a provision that this be reviewed annually.

It was moved by Jan Hargate (seconded by Rebecca Eneix-Chong) and approved that the scholarship amount for school year 2009-2010 be increased to \$2000. The motion was approved.

In lieu of placing the \$4700 Auction Proceeds in the Foundation Account, it was recommended that the funds be placed in a short term (12 month) CD or linked money mark account. The rationale was that the Finance Committee had reviewed the losses occurring with the Foundation Accounts (due to instability of stock markets) and recommended a safer approach that would not incur a loss with the \$4700 and might actually see a slight gain.

After discussion it was moved by Jan Hargate (seconded by Kim Van Rijn) that the \$4700. from the 2008 Auction would be placed in a short term CD earmarked for scholarship and the group would review/make further recommendations when the CD was close to maturation.

**Volunteer Activities & Programs Committee-** In the absence of the chairperson, no report was given.

**2011 International Conference Report-** Lee Reger who is currently serving as 2011 International Conference Committee Treasurer reported that approximately \$35,000. has been raised to date. At the next meeting, he will provide a more comprehensive report on income. Delores Barber, Conference Co-Chair reported that Mailings from the Foundation have gone out to all master gardeners and some pledges have begun to come in. Anyone who has not received a pledge form should contact Delores. She also reported corporate level fundraising continues; they have contracted with a webmaster and work on website is underway. In March, 2009 WV master gardeners will travel to the International Conference in Las Vegas to both market the 2011 Conference and to continue to identify potential sponsors. Delores shared two goals for this year: first, to raise \$200,000. by the end of the year, and secondly, to develop subcommittee structure.

**Public Relations & Communication Committee-** Rebecca Eneix-Chong reported that the committee had met established goals for today's meeting- finalizing proposed revisions to the WV Master Gardener Program Brochure. These will be forward through the board to WV University Extension for review and approval and secondly, work on the next issue of the WVMGA newsletter.

**Membership Retention Committee-** Chairperson Midge Hollon reported the committee is finalizing a membership retention survey. The group is still exploring how the survey is distributed, but generally speaking it was agreed that the data needed would come from both the local Master Gardener Associations and extension offices.

**Education & Continuing Education Committee-** Chairperson Jean Dawson informed the group that a review of other state's requirements for education, volunteer hours and continuing education hours, found West Virginia requirements lower. She share informally the recommendations from her group related to changes in education, continuing education and volunteer hours. They were as follows:

1. Increase Master Gardener Course to 40 hours (increase of 10 hours)
2. Increase the initial volunteer hours for new master gardeners to 40 hours (increase of 10 hours)
3. Increase the annual requirement for continuing education hours to 9 hours
4. Increase the annual requirement for volunteer hours to 15 hours.
5. Implement an Advanced Master Gardener Program

Much discussion followed, with board members citing numerous pros and cons. The question was raised that significant increase in all these areas simultaneously might have an impact on retention of members. Members provided input and made suggestions relative to the modification of these recommendations.

No action was taken on these recommendations. It was recommended that Ms. Dawson consider the input of board members, and further seek input from membership before finalizing a formal recommendation that would come to this board for approval and then be forwarded to WV University Extension Service for final consideration.

**Awards Committee-** Lee Reger, Chairperson, reported as of this date he had not received any nominations for the Golden Trowel or Honorary MG Award. He distributed copies of the criteria and sample awards, and again referred members to the website where all this is published. The deadline was extended to March 15, 2009.

John Jett also reminded the group that county projects need to also be submitted for the awards that are given annually. He will distribute information related to these awards via list serve in the near future.

### **Old Business-**

**Nominating Committee:** John Griggs, Chairman, submitted the following slate of officers:

President: Karen Toothman  
Vice President: Kim Van Rijn  
Secretary: Donna Straley  
Treasurer: Jan Hargate

### **New Business**

**Master Gardener Cookbook:** Sara Howe (Harrison County) reported that the deadline for submitting recipes for the cookbook has been extended to January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The Harrison County group is still hopeful that we can get recipes from every MG or MG group in the state.

**For the Good of the Order:**

Future Meetings:

The next Regular Board Meeting and the Annual Meeting are scheduled to occur during the WVMGA Conference, May 1 -3, with actual dates and times to be determined.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

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Diana Higginbotham, Secretary

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Polly Reynolds, President